

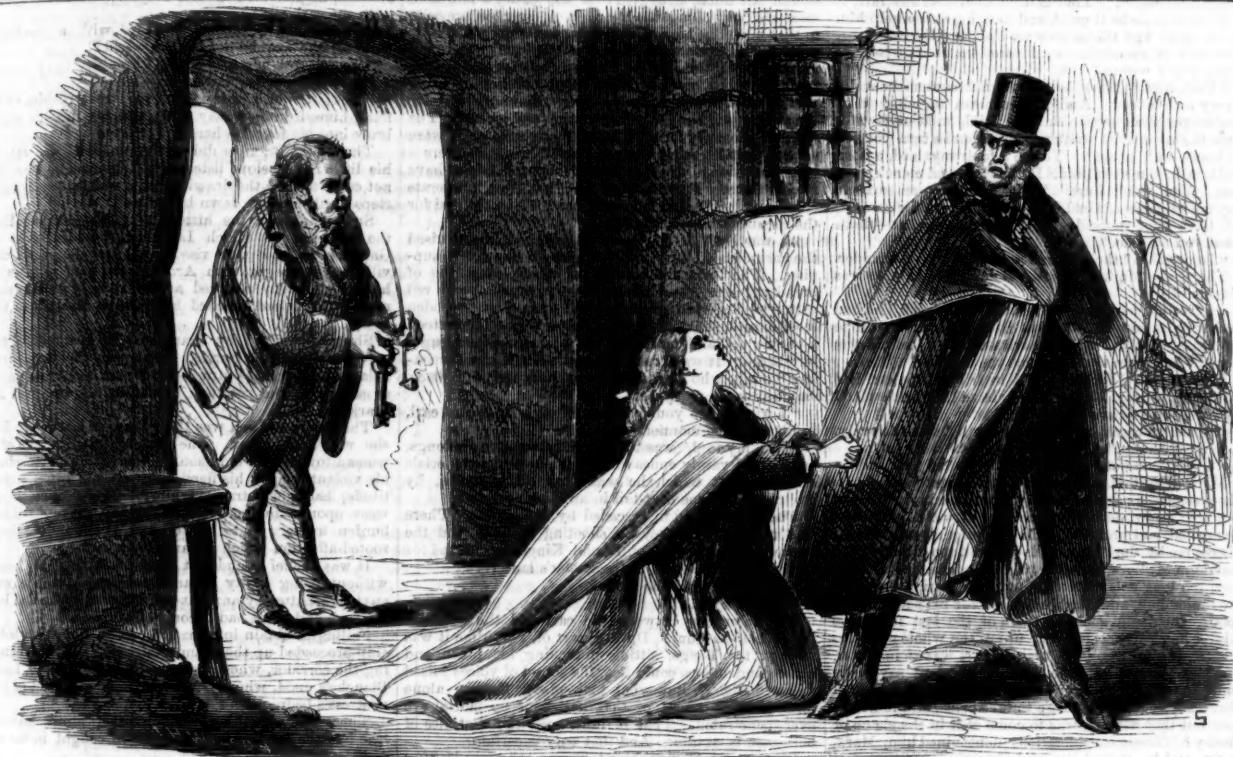
LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

No. 18.—VOL. I.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 12, 1863.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



MAN AND HIS IDOL.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE EARL AND THE PRISONER.

Late! late, so late! and dark the night and chill.
Tennyson.

The proceedings at Redruth House created an immense sensation, not only in the neighbourhood, but throughout the county.

Nothing was talked of but the Earl of St. Omer's reported death, his return to life, and the strange heir who had sprung up and laid claim to his property. As people knew nothing of Daniel Kingston, so their imaginations unfettered by facts, created all sorts of strange rumours. I cannot tell you what crimes the earl, the earl's father and grandfather were not credited with. Little events assume gigantic proportions in small neighbourhoods, and in and about Galescombe the appearance of a claimant for the crown of England could not have occasioned more commotion.

People were divided in opinion, but as is usual in such cases, they inclined to believe in the wildest stories, and especially in those which were least creditable to the actors in them.

Some thought Daniel Kingston simply a madman. But there was not much force in that. The vagaries of the insane are common-place. So by far the greater number set it down that he was a deeply injured man who had been criminally kept out of his rights, and who had very properly taken the earliest opportunity of asserting them.

This was the general view at the Redruth Arms, and it broke out in strong expression when, on the day after the occurrences described, Lady St. Omer came down to the village and passed in her carriage.

"Poor thing!" exclaimed Mrs. Lattice; "looks pale, don't she?"

"As well she may," replied a sharp voice. It was that of Squeel, the village barber, who had the not unusual failing of his class, that he attended to everybody's business better than his own.

"Ah, indeed—poor thing!"

EMMY KINGSTON'S APPEAL TO THE EARL OF ST. OMER.

"She must have had a bad time of it!" exclaimed one of the group of morning drinkers round the bar.

"With him? Yes, sure."

"As for him," remarked another—and it was the earl of whom they spoke in italics—"he looks skeered. For all the world as if he'd seen a ghost!"

"Ah!"

That simple "Ah!" accompanied by a shake of the head, expressed more of suspicion and blame than any form of words.

"Well," said a woman, notorious for her intemperate habits, "my Joe drinks, and it's bad enough to put up wi' he: but he ain't nothink on his mind, thank God! To be with a man as has somethink on his mind is just awful; you may take my word for that."

At that juncture one of the principal rioters of the preceding day dropped in, and feeling, perhaps, that he had gone far enough in the way of bringing down the earl's displeasure on his foolish head, he ventured a suggestion that perhaps his lordship was, after all, not to blame. It might have been only an adventurer who had started up as claimant to the property.

Little Squeel silenced this man at once.

"Oh, indeed!" he said sharply, "that's your opinion, is it? And, pray, if that was so, why didn't my lord take the advice of his lawyers, and prosecute the man outright? Why didn't he have him committed for trial, as he would you or I? What does all this attempt to hush it up mean? Why, if there wasn't nothing in it, you'd ha' been clapped into prison as well as he, and sarve you right."

A murmur of applause followed the speech. Everybody felt that there was truth in it.

Yes, it is of no use for him to try, for a guilty man never acts as an innocent man does. He is playing a part, and he always overplays it. His generosity is exaggerated, and his caution goes to extremes; his assumption of innocence takes some form which it would not wear if it was genuine. Even these illiterate people gathered about the public-house had felt the truth of this.

"What's become of the girl?" asked one of them, referring to Emmy.

"Oh, returned Mrs. Lattice, "she's still livin' in the house; but it's little I see of her. She's either down at the lock-up, or up-stairs cryin' her eyes out?"

"And the man—he as was knocked over by the young swell?"

"Why, they do say he died last night."

"And the young swell himself—which they called him Meredith, didn't un?—he's left?"

"Yes; he's gone back to Elderside, where he came from. They do say that he was fetched by the vicar all in a hurry because his father, old Greggson, as was the missionary, was thought to be dying, and wanted to see him afore he went."

From this conversation you will glean the "disposition of characters" at Galescombe on the morning succeeding that on which the outrage had been committed at Redruth House.

Up to that time the earl had taken no decisive steps.

He simply did not know what to do, or what to refrain from doing. A crisis in his affairs had come, and he was not equal to it. Like many other men, he shrank from taking a prompt, decisive, energetic step which would have made his position secure. He was afraid, and so he hesitated until the hour for action was well nigh over.

A terrible night he had passed through. While the humblest tenant on his estate, the poorest ploughboy and cowherd, slept the sleep of peace, the great earl wandered up and down his vast dimly-lit drawing-room, like the spectre of his dead self.

Piteous it was to see that noble face, which so well became the coronet that had surmounted it, pale and haggard, the eyelids red, the eyes bloodshot, the grey hair blown about in tangled masses, while the form, once so erect, had suddenly given way, the shoulders contracting a stoop, the knees seeming to be incapable of bearing the weight upon them.

No man who saw his lordship could fail in the conclusion that he was a victim to conscience, to remorse, to some terrible secret which had blighted his life. Happily for him, he was alone; in those hours of prolonged agony only the eye of Heaven looked down upon him.

Mark Allardyce had quitted Galescombe by an evening train, after a stormy interview with the earl, who had steadily refused to follow his advice.

"Your course is clear," Mark had said, "convict this man, transport him, and you are safe."

"No, Mark, no!" had been the earl's reply, "I couldn't do it and hope to rest in my grave."

"Why not?" had been Mark's sullen answer.

"Because I am not a villain. No; in spite of your sneers, I am not the man to do another so great a wrong. You think I have condemned this man to a life of poverty. You think I have secured my child's position at the expense of his?"

"Well, it looks very like it," sneered Mark.

"No. It is not so. He has claims—I do not think them valid. He has a case, but it is not one which would hold water. That is my belief. At any rate, it is for him to make it good, and not for me to help him in the task; and till he does so, I am legally in possession, and in remaining so I cannot accuse myself of doing him a wrong."

"Very nice," Mark had answered contemptuously, "very nice indeed. And do you mean to tell me that you've put the question in this mild, milk-and-water style to this upstart wretch, who wants to turn you out of house and home? You're a fool, my lord, a born fool! Oh, I'm not afraid. Don't glare and clench your fists. You won't hurt. Why, if I'd been an earl and any crawling reptile had dared to come near my coronet, I'd have shot it dead. And I tell you what—that's what you must do."

"Impossible," the earl had answered with a shudder.

Thereupon Mark had grown violent, suddenly, as was his manner.

"Get this man transported within a week," he had said, "or as sure as there's a Heaven above us, I'll be the death of him, or I'll weave such a coil round him that the hangman shall save me the trouble."

"No, Mark; I forbid you to interfere," the earl had said peremptorily. "I will not have this man's blood on my head. Leave him to me."

"Swear to transport him, and I will," was the reply.

"No, I cannot."

"Then, look out."

Mark meant it. There was the dangerous light in his eyes, and a peculiar pulling of the cheeks, which, the earl well knew, denoted mischief. It was in vain that he argued and protested. The young reprobate saw his course by the light of self-interest, too clearly. The marriage of Lord Sandown with Blanche had already been too long delayed. Sandown was getting desperate for the money, and Mark hungered for his share of the spoil. Incidents such as those of the last few days might, he clearly perceived, upset the whole arrangement. It might go forth that the earl was an impostor, and then what would the Duke of Hereford say to his son, Lord Sandown, sacrificing himself? Worse than that—suppose the marriage to take place, and it was to turn out that nothing was to come of it in the shape of money? These considerations determined him, Mark, to act, and he quitted the earl abruptly, exasperated at his weak, conscientious scruples.

The earl was alarmed.

He knew best what he had to fear. He also knew, for he had tasted the tortures of remorse; and as Mark left him he felt that whatever rash step might be taken, the sin and the agony would be his.

It was a little before midnight when Mark quitted the house. For two hours the earl paced the drawing-room in the utmost perturbation.

"Oh, that it had been true! Oh, that I were indeed dead! dead!"

That had been the burden of his thoughts.

At length, inspired by a sudden idea, his lordship quitted the drawing-room, and enveloping him in a cloak which he drew from a wardrobe in an adjoining apartment, he took his hat, and stole softly down the richly carpeted stairs.

At the bottom Bramber met him.

"My lord!" he cried.

The earl started at the sight of his own domestic; and, offering some incoherent explanation, ordered him to open a side-door and to leave it on the latch.

Like a thief in the night, the master of Redruth House, stole out into his own park, and darting across the grass, under the shadow of the avenue of trees, he emerged at length at a spot where the park railings were low and skirted a narrow road.

On the inside of the railings there was a ditch, and his lordship having descended into this stood there, with his feet among the fallen sodden leaves, listening. It was not a very dignified position for a nobleman—crouching there like some hunted thing in the dry ditch!

The night was still, but a light wind blew in gusts, and as he listened, the earl thought he could detect steps and voices. He was not deceived. After a little while two men passed. They were talking.

"He isn't dead, you think?" asked one.

"No: I should say not."

"But he would have been had you gone for your doctor two miles off!"

"Likely, sir; he's sorely wounded."

"You're fortunate to find a surgeon at the Redruth."

It was by mere accident that I was there."

"The Lord be praised for it!" was the answer.

The earl, crouching in his own ditch, listened with

astonishment and fear. In the man who had described himself as a surgeon he had detected Mark Allardice, who had no possible claims to that description! The other was a simple countryman. What, then, could their conversation mean?

The earl felt sick at heart as he tried to answer that question. He knew that some strong motive must have induced Mark to adopt the course he was taking: his fears told him that it had to do with the matter on which they had conversed.

When all was still again, the earl clambered up the side of the ditch, struggled over the palings, and then took his way along the road, in a direction opposite to that taken by Mark and his companion.

He did not stop until he had reached the outskirts of the village of Galescombe. There, on a green by the roadside, was a curious, dilapidated building, forming part of what had once been a priory, and now used for the simple purpose of a police-station and lock-up. The place was not very formidable, for though the walls were several feet in thickness, the barred windows were a mere deception. A boy Jack Sheppard could have forced them. Fortunately, they had few desperate characters at Galescombe, and the lock-up sufficed for the requirements of the place.

As the Earl of St. Omer approached, he surprised the custodian of this primitive place in the act of supping. The light and wholesome repast, consisting of bread and cheese and onions, was displayed upon a red cotton pocket-handkerchief spread upon a long wooden stool outside the door of the lock-up. Beside it stood a pewter pot, and near that was a long pipe and paper of tobacco. It was pretty evident that Master Constable Tonge, who had temporary charge of the place, was bent upon enjoyment.

"I wish to see your prisoner, Tonge," said the earl, in his dignified manner.

"Yes, my lord," was the respectful answer of Tonge, as he stood vainly endeavouring to hide the materials of the repast which he was bent on enjoying, by stretching out one coat-tail in an idiotic fashion.

The earl passed in preceded by the gaoler. There was a turning of keys, a shooting of bolts, and the white, amiable face of Daniel Kingston showed for an instant in the light of the gaoler's lantern.

"Leave us," said the earl.

Tonge obeyed.

The interview between the earl and the prisoner lasted half-an-hour. During part of that time it was stormy, for Tonge, sitting munching his bread and cheese and onions, could hear the sound of voices raised in altercation. But what took place, Heaven alone knows! The secret of that half-hour no mortal eye ever penetrated. That it influenced the destinies of both men is certain. And that only is certain.

When the earl reappeared, Tonge, who was leaning against the door-post, turned round and instinctively removed his pipe out of deference to his distinguished visitor. But having done so, he remained for a minute holding the pipe in the air, and like one struck dumb with horror. The face, the entire bearing of the earl, scared him. He never forgot that wild, startled look, or the convulsive shudder of the earl's frame.

Years after he spoke of it as one of the horrors which came to him sometimes in dreams, and would not die out of his memory.

"Good night!" gasped the earl.

"Good night, my lord," faltered the astonished Tonge.

The Earl of St. Omer passed slowly out, wrapping his cloak about him. As he did so, the gaoler saw that he encountered a woman with a childish face, and thick masses of golden hair, who tried to arrest his attention and to stop him, as he strode on. For an instant, the gaoler saw his lordship glanced at the face, uttered a cry of pain, and slipped from the encircling arms of the woman, who sank upon her knees, exclaiming, "My father! my father!"

That woman was Emmy Kingston, who all that night had loitered about the lock-up, vainly endeavouring to move Tonge to grant her the liberty of speaking one word to her father. As the earl now roughly thrust her away, some impulse moved the gaoler to permit her to enter the prison.

He beckoned to her: she sprang forward. They went into the cell together, and together found Daniel Kingston lying senseless upon the stone floor.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE LAST APPEAL.

There is a Power, a Love, a Joy, a God,
Which makes in mortal hearts its brief abode;
A Pythean exhalation which inspires
Love—only love!

Shelley.

THE Earl of St. Omer returned to Redruth House by the same means as he had left it.

Bramber left him in.

The old servant had seen his lordship excited; he had seen him ill; but he had never seen him as he looked that night. His face was like the face of a ghost.

His eyes glazed. His limbs shook like the limbs of a palsied man.

"It is very cold," muttered his lordship, with chattering teeth, as he made his way up into the drawing-room.

In fact, the night was warm. Bramber knew that, but said nothing. He fetched the spirit case, and placed it before the earl, who poured himself out half a glassful of brandy, and drank it. Still he shivered.

Bramber had been charged with a message from Lady Blanche, and after fidgeting about for some seconds, he delivered it. Her ladyship wished to speak with the earl.

"To-night!" cried his lordship, with a shudder: "not for the world—not for the world!"

"To-morrow, my lord?" said Bramber.

His reply was singular.

"Yes; should it ever come!" said his lordship, as he flung himself into an easy chair, and ground his white brow into his feverish hands.

That night Bramber did not go to bed. He sat in his little room below, listening to his master, who did not cease to pace the drawing-room with unsteady footsteps until the grey dawn had come.

Such had been the history of the night preceding the morning on which Lady St. Omer arrived at Galescombe, and gave rise to the comments of the villagers at the Redruth Arms. Her ladyship—who had been greatly alarmed at the rumour of the outrage which had reached her—drove straight to the house.

She was received by Bramber, and the rest of the servants; and, in a hurried way, received some particulars of the recent outrage—sufficient to set her mind at ease as to the results. Her next inquiry was for Mark.

That reprobate son was the torture of her life. Yet she was his mother. She had all the feelings of a woman towards an only son. You will ask whether his violent temper, his fierce passions, his gross ingratitude, had not estranged him? No! Such things wear upon a mother's heart. They make her life a burden to her; but they do not pluck out the deep-rooted affection which is part of her very life.

It was a relief to find that Mark had quitted the house without being guilty of any violence; yet she was anxious—naturally anxious—to know why he had left the earl, and what had become of him?

Failing to obtain information on this point, her ladyship proceeded up the grand staircase, and was entering the corridor, when she encountered Manton, Lady Blanche's maid, who at that moment came out of her mistress's bedroom.

There was something peculiar in Manton's manner. She had the startled look of a person caught in the act of listening.

"My lady!" she exclaimed, in surprise.

"Yes, Manton; where is your lady?"

"With—the earl, my lady; I will announce you."

"No! I will go to them. Are they in the library?"

"Yes, my lady."

The expression upon Manton's face denoted that she was anything but pleased at this resolution. She, in fact, feared some consequences which, however, she did not dare to explain.

Lady St. Omer gathered this, and, without further remark, continued her way to the library. Before the door of the apartment hung a rich damask, suspended by rings from a brass rod.

As it happened, the door itself was not quite closed, though the curtains were drawn, and as her ladyship approached she could hear voices within in conversation. Those were the voices of the earl and the Lady Blanche.

Something which the latter was saying arrested the countess's attention, and induced her to listen. It was an undignified act; but she thought it justified by the circumstances.

"If you would but listen to me," she heard Blanche say; "if you would but hear how utterly distasteful this man is to me; what loathing he inspires, you would not, you could not force this marriage on me."

"You distress me, Blanche; you distress me to no purpose. The countess and myself have decided on this match, after the most earnest and painful thought, and we have given our word to the duke. In what light would he regard us if we threw over his son in favour of a commoner—a nobody?"

"And my happiness—that is of no account?" urged Blanche.

"My child, my child," said the earl, tenderly; "do not think me harsh or cruel. Believe me, I love you better than myself. But I do not dare sacrifice everything, even to your happiness—could the gratification of your wish secure it, which is very doubtful. I am the representative of a great family. I am here to maintain the honour of a name, which has come down to me untarnished since the Conquest. I have no son, and it is therefore to you, my child, that I look to support the dignity of our house. This you can only do by an

alliance worthy of us, and such an alliance is that we have arranged for you."

"But, father, the duke is poor; his son is all but penniless. In this alliance I am nothing; it is my fortune alone which tempts them."

"And for which," interposed the earl, "they are willing to barter their superior rank. The possibility of raising you to their own height is all they have to offer—but what a boon that is! If I could see you, my child, a duke's wife, I should die happy."

"And I—father, it will kill me—it will kill me!"

There was a pause. It was evident that both speakers were greatly overcome with emotion. Presently Blanche spoke with a tearful voice:

"If he were but a good man!" she said. "But he is a rake; his character is of the blackest. What hope can I have of peace, of happiness, with such a being?"

"Oh, you will reform him, Blanche; your piety will act like a spell upon him. I have known many instances of this. The reformed rake is always the best husband. Besides he is young; he has been placed in situations of great temptation; his very poverty has made him stoop to acts which he could hardly have justified; and now, when he becomes comparatively rich, doubtless he will redeem the past."

"Never! never!" sighed Blanche.

"At all events, painful as it is to me to thwart your slightest wish, my darling, I must be firm in this. The marriage must take place. The settlements are preparing. Your jewels are ordered. The very lace for your wedding-dress is being manufactured in Paris. It is inevitable!"

"But father—do not turn from me; do not leave me—can you not understand that in dooming me to this hateful marriage you are dooming me to death? Oh, hear me! Hear me, while there is yet time. Think what it is you ask me to do!"

"I have thought."

"No, no; not seriously, not as a father should think before he sacrifices his child. How can I approach the altar with this man? How can I promise to love him when my heart is another's? How can I vow to honour him whom I loathe, despise, detest? How can I hope to obey him when his every thought must be repugnant to mine? Father, father, I can but perjure my soul before God's altar; and if I do it, what can I hope but that His blessings will fall as curses upon my head?"

This outburst of passionate entreaty was not without its effect, even upon the countess. The tears came into her eyes; but her lips were set, firmly set, as if she was resolved that nothing should move her from her purpose.

Still listening, she heard the earl answer:

"This is painful, my child."

"Painful!" was Blanche's indignant exclamation.

"Most painful, since what is done is inevitable."

"But I am not yet that man's wife?"

"Yes; in honour."

"Oh, there is time—there is time to retract!"

"No."

"But no contracts are signed; no settlements completed?"

"No; but I have given my word."

Blanche did not reply; but a piteous groan escaped her lips.

It was the earl who proceeded.

"And since I have pledged my honour to one course, do not, I entreat you, Blanche—do not again revert to this painful subject. Its discussion can avail nothing. I have granted you this interview, foolishly, weakly, perhaps, that I might tell you so; that I might point out to you that we in our exalted station are bound to rise superior to the weaknesses of humanity. We cannot love or hate, or act as we will; but as our station demands. We must act as becomes representatives of the past, and as those whose example will become the precedent of the future. As Earl of St. Omer I am bound to forget that I have a father's heart, as you, my child, you must be guided only by your sense of duty."

As those words were spoken, the countess drew aside the curtain and entered the library.

Both the earl and Blanche looked up in astonishment at her sudden apparition.

"I have heard what you have just uttered," said her ladyship, severely, "and these sentiments are mine. Some day, my darling," she added, approaching and folding Blanche to her bosom, "you will come to think so. We have been young—the earl and I. We have had our passing fancies—passions we called them; but our destinies were controlled by older and wiser heads, and we can now look back with satisfaction to the decision they made for us."

What could Blanche answer?

Animated by all the warmth which the appearance of Kingston Meredith at the house had inspired in her, feeling that to love him was her destiny, to forget him impossible, she had resolved on this last appeal to the earl's fatherly heart.

That appeal had utterly failed.

His refusal to listen to her had been based on argu-

ments which she saw that it was impossible to refute, and now, utterly prostrated, she gave herself up a passive victim to the fate to which she saw herself doomed.

As she rose and slowly dragged herself from the room, the countess turned to the earl, and abruptly changed the subject of conversation.

"This outrage?" she asked, "was it as you feared?"

"Yes!" said the earl, and his face suddenly changed.

"It was he? And what have you decided?"

"To dare the worst. To charge him with breaking into this house, and to leave him to the consequences of his defence."

"The consequences?"

"Certainly. If I succeed, he will get a long term of imprisonment, which will cool his ardour; if he brings up his plea, it will probably be strong enough to lodge him in a lunatic asylum for life!"

The eyes of the earl and countess met with a peculiar meaning over those words "for life."

"And when do you authorize proceedings?" asked the countess.

"I have done so; he will be brought before the Bench this morning, at once. Tullett and Tullett have instructions."

They were interrupted by the entrance of a servant.

"A constable, my lord, from the lock-up," the servant said:

As he spoke, the policeman walked in.

"Well?" asked his lordship, sharply.

"The prisoner, my lord, Daniel Kingston, is ill—too ill to be brought up this morning."

The face of the earl underwent a sudden convulsion. It looked like the face of a corpse.

The countess did not observe this; she was standing a little behind the earl.

"What ails him?" she asked, with natural curiosity.

"Vomiting, burning of the throat—" began the constable.

The earl's right hand tugged at the skirts of her ladyship's dress, by way of caution.

"I see," said her ladyship. "He is suffering from the epidemic. English cholera is very prevalent; those are its symptoms."

The constable departed.

There was a long pause, during which the countess strolled to a window and looked thoughtfully out.

CHAPTER XXXVI

LITTLE LINKS.

Be not their dupes. Their dupes? that hour is past.

Here stands't thou in the glory and the calm!

Brooming.

THE proceedings of Mark Allardyce on quitting Redruth House, were, to say the least of them, mysterious.

He left, as we know, in a great state of excitement and exasperation, annoyed at the earl's irresolution, and with the express determination of doing something to expedite results for which he was impatient.

Where he passed the two hours that elapsed up to the time at which the earl heard his voice, as he passed the park railings has not transpired. Most probably it was at some public-house, where he picked up the man upon whom he passed himself off as a surgeon. That man, Nathan Lee by name, rented a small cottage, half a mile from Redruth House. It stood in a lonely by-way, sheltered by several stunted elms, remains of what had been a fine plantation, and before it, on the opposite side of the path, was a pond, the water of which was quite black, owing in part to its depth.

Nathan Lee did not bear a very good character at Galescombe. But then he was a convicted poacher—and in the country poaching is a crime of far deeper dye than it would ever occur to townfolks to regard it as being. Moreover he was connected with horses, attended fairs; dealt, chaffered, and as the popular verdict went, cheated the innocent, in a manner which rendered his horse-dealing only a milder species of horse-stealing.

The conversation between this man and Mark which the earl overheard had reference to Steve Broad, and as they pushed on and reached Lee's house, they found a room in it devoted to that estimable personage, who had made the acquaintance of Lee on some former occasion, and who now passed as his lodger.

Steve Broad was decidedly ill. The popular voice had not much exaggerated his condition. If not dead he was very near it—he was delirious, and eaten up with fever. The pistol-shot wound in his arm had not been properly dressed; some foreign matter probably still remained in it, and there were alarming symptoms of mortification.

New it had happened to Mark Allardyce early in life to turn his thoughts towards some profession by means of which he might obtain an honest livelihood. By what chance this idea took possession of his mind I can't say. As a rule, he cultivated idleness as a science, and was only clever at doing nothing. But the three months' spurt of industry had formed an era in his life, and he now found the benefit of it.

That three months had been devoted to surgery; and though I need hardly say that it was very little he had acquired, still he was acquainted with such simple remedies and appliances as enabled him to give Steve Broad relief, and set Lee's mind to rest as to the fact of his being a medical man out of practice.

In an hour or so, the ruffian on whom he exercised his skill was sensible.

Then Mark, on some pretext, got Lee, and an old woman who pattered about, and who called herself a nurse, out of the room.

Immediately they were gone, he bent down and whispered in the patient's ear. Whatever the nature of his communication, it brought a red flush into the man's cheek, and caused him to regard Mark with a peculiar look of his wild eyes.

"Where is it?" asked Mark, audibly, rapidly growing angry.

"Gone. I never had it. What right have you to say I had a hand in the Ratilior. It's a lie!" So the patient answered.

"Stick to that!" said Mark, savagely—"stick to it and I leave you to die here like a dog."

"Why do you want it?" whispered Steve.

"Oh, you have got it, then?" answered Mark.

"P'raps I have—p'raps I haven't!" muttered the patient.

"Curse this wound—it burns like flame!"

"I can ease it," said Mark.

"How?"

"You've got the means."

"No!" shouted the patient, half-raising himself in his bed, in spite of the anguish which every movement caused him. "I know your game. You want to silence me. But I'm fly! I'll die before you shall lay a finger on me now."

For some time he contended fiercely against Mark's wishes. Then exhaustion overcame him, and he could only feebly follow with his strained eyes the man who furtively examined his clothes at the bed's foot, and quietly possessed himself of what he chose.

It may be inferred that he found something which met with his approval, for soon after he became impatient to go, and having given some directions to Nathan Lee as to how he should proceed, Mark stole out of the house and took the way back to Galescombe.

"That fellow's safe," he muttered, as he strode along; "the fever will eat him up like fire. So much the better. Now!"

In a hasty, excited, restless mood, Mark pursued his course along the dark road without interruption. In doing so it was necessary that he should re-pass the lock-up, and to his surprise he did not perceive the constable seated, as was his wont, at the seat by the door. So feeling tired, he sat down there himself, and began to think, still looking out of the corners of his eyes, in anticipation of the constable's arrival.

Presently he rose, entered the open doorway, and unceremoniously pushed in toward the cells. But as he went he heard the clang of a bolt, and discovered that persons were coming out.

"Only for an hour! One little hour!" he heard the pleading voice of a girl say.

"Impossible!" was the reply.

"But he is ill. He may die in that cold, lonely cell."

"Can't help it. I've gone beyond the rules already."

"But you will let me send him something—something nice?"

"I ought not."

"But you will—say that you will. No one shall know of it. I will promise that."

"Well, I'll say 'yes'; and now, off with you. And if you'll take my advice, my girl, you'll hurry home to bed. This night-air don't suit that cough of yours."

"You mistake, indeed you do. 'Tis not a cough, only a little hoarseness."

"Don't tell me," was the reply.

Mark Allardyce heard all this, and his eyes twinkled, and the hateful smile habitual to him crept like a snake into his face. He had drawn himself up close to the wall, and as the gaoler came along, followed by Emmy Kingston, both uttered a startled cry.

"What are you doing here, sir?" demanded the gaoler.

"Well," returned Mark, "my purpose is very simple. You will perhaps recognize me as the earl's son-in-law? Good; now, though his lordship has taken the only step possible to him in securing the person of the unfortunate man who has taken a fancy to his title and estates, he has no desire that his daughter should suffer. He has, therefore, requested me to seek her out, and to assure her that, whatever may happen, it is his wish that she should be taken care of. You are, he added, addressing Emmy, "at present staying at the Redruth Arms?"

"I am!" she answered, not meekly, as she usually spoke, but firmly, almost proudly.

"I am commissioned then to say, that if you will please to remain there as the earl's guest—"

She interrupted him.

"I can accept nothing from the Earl of St. Omer, but my father's liberty," she said,

"That, unfortunately," replied Mark, "I cannot offer you. It rests in his own hands. He best knows what has prompted the acts by which he has lost it, and if he can but justify them, all will be well. In the meantime, you should acquit the earl of any wrongdoing. Your father had a legal remedy: he chose to adopt illegal means to obtain his ends—can the earl be blamed if he permits the consequences of that illegality to fall upon the man's own head?"

Mark had, as we know, a specious, winning way, if he chose to adopt it. But Emmy Kingston had not forgotten that terrible night when her father returned to her pale and emaciated, and denounced the earl as his intended murderer. She had not forgotten the oath he then extracted from her, to regard the earl as his deadly foe, and to pray that the curse of Heaven might descend upon him and his.

For a time therefore, Mark produced little effect upon the young, innocent girl. But he determined not to resign the attempt to gain some influence over her. If for no other reason the marvellous likeness which she bore to Blanche St. Omer, would have decided him to keep her in view. That likeness was in itself confirmatory to an extent of Daniel Kingston's claims to relationship; but Mark had another object. Mark had an object which had influenced his proceedings all that night.

By dint of much artfulness and persuasion, he at length induced Emmy to return to the Redruth Arms, and to permit him to accompany her.

This point once conceded, he gained an easy victory over her confidence, and contrived to extract much valuable information for future use. For though Emmy did not like him, did not even trust him, she could not help permitting herself to reveal certain facts which, though apparently of no special interest, yet determined Mark on the course he would pursue.

Among other points, Emmy admitted freely her father's poverty, his friendless condition and his animosity against the Earl of St. Omer. And by this time they had reached the house.

The surprise of Mrs. Lattice at seeing her young lodger return in company with a young gentleman, and that the earl's son-in-law, was extreme. But she argued favourably from that fact as to Daniel Kingston's affairs, and the customers soon came to a conclusion that a compromise had been effected between the rival earls.

Emmy would have parted with Mark at the door, but he was not a man to be shaken off, and he followed her up boldly into the sitting-room, she had secured. Too timid to order him to leave her, she did the next best thing. She at once rang for Mrs. Lattice, but growing nervously impatient, she did not wait in the room until the landlady came. She went out into the passage and looked over the banisters waiting for her.

During that interval the door of the room which she had left open, swung slowly to, as if by accident, and Emmy thought she could hear Mark get up and cross the room. It might however have been fancy. When she returned he was seated on the sofa, where she had left him; but a curious observer might have noticed that his handkerchief had dropped to the ground on the opposite side of the room. How it came there, Mark best knew.

The discussion between Mrs. Lattice and Emmy, turned on the nature of the delicacy to be prepared for Daniel Kingston, and the good-hearted landlady at once decided on some dish for which she was famed, and which had the advantage of being at once pleasant to the taste and nutritious.

This being agreed on, Mark rose, and bowing, prepared to take his leave.

"I will not intrude, Miss Kingston," he said, with the easy politeness of a well-bred man, "but allow me to say that I shall remain here for several days, and no doubt we shall often meet. And should there be anything in which I can help you, do not hesitate to command my services."

Emmy thanked him. She could not do less; but she instinctively shrank from putting herself under an obligation to that man.

As he was leaving he turned abruptly, and said, "Pardon me; but the name of Kingston is peculiar, and it is borne by a friend of mine. Do you know Mr. Meredith?"

A hot flush suffused the features of the girl; she looked down, then raised her eyes with obvious confusion.

"Yes—a little," she answered.

"You are aware, then, that his Christian name is Kingston? Is he related to you?"

"Oh, no."

"Not remotely?"

"No. Not that I have ever heard."

"Indeed! I thought it probable. Good night!"

He raised his hat and descended the stairs.

"That girl was lying," he said; "they are related, and she knows it. She has been put up to denying it to throw us off the scent. I always had my fears of that beggar, Meredith. He's clever and cunning. I'll attend to him next."

But before attending to Meredith he took a very unusual course for a gentleman. He noted that the bar was empty, and on reaching it he peered cautiously round, then darted into the kitchen, which was on the same floor. After a second or two he returned, red in the face, and with eager inquisitive eyes. To his great relief he was able to leave the house without being obstructed.

Having done so, he walked briskly off, but soon stepped on to the narrow bordering of turf which flanked the hard road, and stole back as far as the Hawthorn hedge on the right of the open space in front of the house. Through that hedge the light from the bar window fell faintly and dimly; but it was sufficient to enable those cunning eyes of his, deep sunken beneath their light eyebrows, to examine an object which he drew from his pocket.

It consisted of a little pocket-book stuffed with papers, and tied round with a fragment of red ribbon.

On opening it Mark drew forth several letters, an old coin, a wedding-ring, and a broken miniature. The valuables he replaced. The papers he commenced reading. As he did so it was possible, even in the dim light, to perceive that his face grew animated with excitement, and that his eyes glowed over the writing.

"God!" he exclaimed, involuntarily speaking aloud: "and Omer knew that this was in existence! Knew it, and allowed these wretches to go thus far! He is a born idiot."

Two papers only attracted special attention. The rest Mark merely glanced at, and then returned to the pocket-book, which he placed in his breast.

"Now," he said, as he stole softly away: "now to give the final stroke to their pretensions. After this, St. Omer, you may sleep safely—though you little dream of it. I alone retain the power to terrify you, and that power secures me half the earldom."

He paused and hesitated over the two fragments of paper which he had read with such avidity, and which he yet held in his hands.

"Safe enough with me," he muttered: "but no! Even I might lose them, or be robbed of them."

He turned in at an opening in the road as he spoke, and made his way across a field, a short cut to Redruth House.

As he went he tore those papers across and across, slowly and deliberately, and with a smile upon his face as he did it, as if the task afforded him infinite enjoyment. Then he took the small particles and tossed them one by one into the air. It was too dark for him to see what became of them, but he felt one or two flutter past his face, and so he had the assurance that they were well dispersed.

And as the last fragment left his hand he raised it with a gesture of exultation.

"There goes your earldom, Daniel Kingston & Co.!" he said bitterly, following the words with a hoarse laugh.

Clever Mark!

Who so clever; so cunning; so dexterous in working out his crafty will? It was a pity but that the eyes of day should have looked upon the smile of self-gratulation that puckered his face as he walked so jauntily home. Astute Mark! What match for him poor Daniel Kingston lying in his wretched cell? Or the simple, innocent Emmy, who, while preparing to snatch a few hours of necessary rest, first turns her eyes toward the little bundle in the corner of the room, containing all their worldly wealth, and even with her fingers ascertained that the pocket-book—the foundation of an earldom, is safe! Quite safe—she can feel it through the handkerchief in which it is wrapped. Or, again, what chance has the broken-hearted man, driven like a dog from the presence of his Idol, the Lady Blanche, and who is gone back to Elderside Vicarage to keep his promise to the old man—old Aaron Greggson, whose name, to his intense astonishment, had acted on the earl like a talisman?

What, indeed, are the chances of simple folk like these as against the wily, dexterous, unscrupulous Mark Allardyce?

(To be continued.)

THE HAMPTON COURT VINE is this year in magnificent condition, the expected yield being above the average. It is estimated that there are 1,400 bunches of grapes, computed to weigh, when ripe, 800 lbs.

In proof of the great heat this year, it may be mentioned that the water of the Seine has fallen to the level of the great drought of the year 1719, which forms the zero line of the metrical ladder on the Pont Royal for measuring the standard depth of the river. This is the second time only since that period of nearly 150 years ago that it has fallen to so low a level.

THE late visit of his Royal Highness Prince Arthur to Dolgelly is likely to be of permanent benefit to the town. The Prince, following the example of the Queen, ordered a splendid dress of linsey-woolsey for his sister, Princess Beatrice—a Welsh hat, shoes, &c., with strict injunctions that the whole must be of Welsh

material and make. The order has been completed and the articles forwarded to the young Princess, after having been on view a day or two at Dolgelly.

THE INDIAN MODE OF CAPTURING THE STURGEON.

STURGEONS are very abundant in both the Fraser and Columbia rivers, and have been taken in the Columbia 1,500 miles from the sea, having managed, spite of their cumbersome armour, to surmount all the salmon leaps. The Indians say they remain up in the fresh water all the year round. These sturgeon also work their way up the Snake River to the great Shoshoon Falls, 200 miles from its junction with the Columbia. They have been taken there 500 lb. in weight; this would be at least 800 miles from the sea. In the Fraser River they remain all the year round, ascending as far up as Fort Hope, which is roughly about 500 miles from the sea; but then for about 100 miles this river ebbs and flows from tidal influence. The sturgeon spawn in the fresh water in June and July. The Indians most positively assert that the sturgeon suckles its young like the whale, but of course this cannot be true. They are much more abundant in the Fraser than in the Columbia River; and going up and down the Fraser in a canoe you constantly see huge fellows 400 or 500 lb. in weight leap out of the water three or four feet above its surface, and make a splash as though a small mountain had fallen into the river.

At the Dalles, on the Columbia, the Indians take them with a hook, and baited in this fashion: the Indians cut a long strip from a salmon or trout, and after weighting the hook and line just where they are fastened together, they wind this piece of fish round and round, beginning at the bend of the hook, and continuing it for about four inches up the line, then bind it tightly round with white horse-hair. Out they paddle in their canoes to a still place, where the sturgeon lies at the bottom, and the baited line sinks to the ground. Master Sturgeon sucks it in, and soon finding he has "caught a Tartar," lashes about violently; but the canoe sticks to him until, a chance offering itself, a couple of barbed spears, sent deeply into him, settle the question; he is towed ashore, and affords a grand feast to his red-skin deceivers. He is among fish a veritable pig, living on anything he can catch—wrack, decomposing vegetable matter, aquatic larvae, univalve molluscs, and small fish; the form of his mouth—opening beneath, nearly in a line with his orbits—and the general disposition of his fins, evidence a ground-feeder.

In the Fraser River the Indians take them by spearing. Three or four canoes are allowed to drift slowly down stream with their bows even, kept in this position by skilful paddlers sitting in the stern. A strong savage stands in the bow of each canoe with a long spear, about seventy or eighty feet in length; at the end of the haft is a barbed trident-like spear, made of bone, and from this a long line of strong cord comes into the canoe, and is coiled carefully away. The spearman feels along the bottom on the mud, and know in a second if the spear touches a sturgeon's back, and when it does, home goes the spear, crashing through the armour; a sharp jerk at once detaches the handle from the barbed end. Not fancying this rude intrusion through his armour-plates, up Master Sturgeon dashes to the surface to see what it means, and not liking the general appearance of things, up goes his powerful tail, and lashing the water, sends it dancing into the air a perfect fog of spray; then, taking a "sensation header," makes the line fairly whistle over the side of the canoe. The paddle man then uses all his skill and energy, following with marvellous dexterity the twists and dodges of the pained and irate fish. Then Sir Sturgeon has a sulky fit, and buries himself in his fondly-cherished mud. To wake him up in goes another spear. Up he comes again, trying another ruse by floating lazily on the surface, as much as to say, "You may slack your line, old redskin, I am done for." It won't do, Siwash (Chinook for "savage") is too old a bird to be deceived by such stupid chaff, and so keeps a long coil of line ready for him, knowing full well that pain and anger will do their work. Down like an arrow he goes again, and, but for the ready coil, over would go the canoe; and so this goes on until four or five canoes have a hold upon a heavy sturgeon. Finding all his schemes but abortive failures, and strength and life fast ebbing away, gradually he is towed nearer and nearer to the shelving bank; eager hands, with long poles, with strong gaff-hooks at the end, are anxiously watching his approach. Once within reach, his end is certain; hauled ashore, he is cut up, and speedily disposed of.

The sturgeons are much prized by the Indians, and they grow to an immense size—from 50 to over 700 lb. in weight. The roe, so famed as caviare, in Russia, and the isinglass, so esteemed in our culinary arts, are here made no use of.

The small sturgeon must go back to the sea, and only return again when mature.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jewit," "The Prelate," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER XIV.

The fall of me

Is an unlesson'd girl—unschooled, unpractis'd—
Happy in this: she is not yet so old
But she may learn.

Shakespeare.

"This way, my loves!" whispered the old woman, in an endearing tone; "I will take care of you till your father is released—trust to me, my dears—I will not deceive you!"

Alarmed at the shouts and laughter of the village mob, the poor children, after some natural hesitation, followed the speaker—who gradually led them into a retired lane in which a chaise, driven by a respectable-looking old man, who had all the appearance of a domestic out of livery, was waiting. As they approached the vehicle, a thin, shrewish-looking female, about fifty years of age, thrust her head from the window.

"Have you succeeded?" she demanded.

The old woman pointed to the children, and held out her hand, into which the female in the chaise dropped a well-filled purse.

"We have no time to lose," she continued; "in with them!"

It was not without much persuasion, aided by some violence, that Maybeam and Violet permitted themselves to be seated by the speaker, who immediately drew up the blinds of the chaise, which started off at a rapid pace. For some miles they rode in silence, which Maybeam was the first to break.

"Where are you taking us to?" she inquired, boldly.

"To those who will take care of you, my love!" answered the female, in what was intended to be an amiable tone.

"I don't want to be taken care of!" exclaimed the child, with a sulky air. "I want to go back to my father! I will go back!" she added.

"You must go to him in prison, then!" observed the woman—thinking by that fearful word to terrify them into submission.

"We don't mind that!" said the girl, with a bold laugh; "do we Violet? It wouldn't be the first time! I rather like prison for a week or two—it's so quiet, and we get such nice rest—don't we, Violet?"

Her sister, who had hitherto been mute and terrified, looked in the countenance of the speaker, and faintly smiled. Poor innocent! what must her life have been, when one of its most pleasing recollections was the days she had passed within the walls of a gaol? But, as Maybeam said, it was rest—rest to her weary limbs—rest from the brutal scenes of riot, vice, and dissipation which daily terrified her; although, fortunately, she was too young to comprehend their mortal hideousness.

"Then you are not fond of dancing?" inquired the female.

"I am, but Violet cannot bear it!"

"What do you think of these pretty dresses?" continued the querist, opening a carpet-bag, and displaying two silk frocks.

"Beautiful!" was the exclamation of both the children.

It required little persuasion to induce Maybeam and her sister to exchange the faded, gaudy trumpery in which they were attired, for the really elegant dresses which the female displayed—their toilette was made in the chaise, which still continued its progress at a rapid rate. In less than an hour every article of their apparel was changed—so great was the transformation, that even the mountebank would have found it difficult to recognise them. The children regarded each other with admiration, clasped their little hands, and laughed for joy.

"Well!" muttered the woman, with a grim smile of satisfaction, "it is a change—they look like human creatures now!"

With infinite care, she folded the garments they had taken off, and placed them one by one in the carpet-bag, which she locked, and put the key in her capacious pocket.

"And are we to keep these beautiful things?" inquired Maybeam.

"As long as you are good!" was the reply.

"Then we will be very good!" answered the child; "won't we, Violet?"

Her sister nodded and smiled.

"Only to think!" she added, *saucily*, "that such a cross-looking, ugly, old woman should be so kind! I did not like you at first—no more did Violet!"

A bitter scowl passed over the features of the female at this ungracious observation—which, although made with the artless innocence of childhood, stung her more keenly, perhaps, than a premeditated insult would have done—from that moment she felt that she hated her.

With all her ingenuity—and children are extremely ingenious at cross-questioning those who have the charge of them—Maybeam could not elicit from their

new guardian either whither they were being conveyed, or why they had been separated from their father. Overcome by excitement and fatigue, she at last fell asleep, her little arm clasped tightly round the waist of her sister, as if to protect her. At the slightest movement in the chaise she started up; but, satisfied that Violet was by her side, soon closed her eyes again.

In this manner the party travelled for several days, generally by cross-country roads and bye-ways; sleeping at night in lonely roadside houses, where they passed for two domestics conducting the children of their master from London to his house in the country. Neither the woman nor her companion permitted their charge an instant from their sight, or allowed them to hold the least communication with the servants of the inns.

From this obscure manner of travelling—always taking unfrequented roads, and carefully avoiding all mention of their ultimate destination—it would have been difficult, even for a wealthy pursuer, to have traced them. To the poor mountebank it was impossible. His search for his lost children extended no farther than the neighbouring villages—in one of which he met with a company of strollers, who readily engaged him.

In relating his misfortune to his new associates, he used to declare that he should know the old woman who had enticed them from him again; and expressed his conviction that he should one day meet with her—a circumstance which his itinerant mode of life rendered by no means improbable.

On the borders of Northumberland, about two miles from the village of Fulton, stands an old manor-house, known by the name of Tixholm—for several centuries the property of the Grahams. The last possessor of that name—Hugh Graham—having been induced to join the Earl of Derwentwater in his rebellion of 1715, had died in exile—his property having previously been confiscated by the government of the day, and bestowed upon one of its own adherents.

One by one the farms had been alienated by its new possessors, till all that remained of the original grant was the manor-house and inclosed, park-like demesne around it.

After having been deserted for many years, Tixholm had lately been taken by a widow lady, named Graham. Of her past life the inhabitants of Fulton could glean nothing; and the little they knew of her present mode of existence only tended to increase their curiosity.

The "strange lady"—for so she was generally designated—from the day she had arrived at the manor-house, had never once left it, even to visit the village church; and the two servants, whom she brought with her, led a life almost as retired as their mistress. Their visits to the village were few and brief.

All that could be gleaned respecting the new-comers was from the old gardener and his wife, who for many years had been left in charge of the place, and whose services Mrs. Graham still retained. This gossiping couple described their new lady as being very reserved and very proud, and the domestics as even more reserved than their mistress—who seldom left her room, and only walked in the grounds of an evening—but knew not the cause of her thus secluding herself from the world.

After a residence of nearly two years, the curiosity of the villagers—which had almost died a natural death—was revived by an event which added to the number of inmates in the old manor-house.

At a late hour in the evening, towards the end of October, Caleb Brown and Mrs. Williams—the names of the two domestics—who had been absent nearly a month, returned, bearing with them two children, to all appearance, twin sisters, so closely did they resemble each other in person and age. As our readers doubtless suspect, they were the daughters of the mountebank, whose abduction we described at the commencement of this chapter.

When Maybeam and Violet were first introduced to the presence of Mrs. Graham, they were subdued, and almost terrified, at the cold, stern manner of their future protectress, who appeared to regard them with mingled aversion and affection.

"Go and kiss the lady," whispered Mrs. Williams to the bewildered little travellers. "Why do you hesitate?"

Violet remained silent; but her sister answered for both.

"Because she does not look as if she wished us to kiss her!" she made answer. "Is this a school?"

She had often heard of a school as something terrible. The mountebank used to threaten her with one, when in her obstinate humours.

"A school!" repeated the lady, with a deep-drawn sigh. "Yes—yes! It is a school of repentance and atonement—of vengeance, too," she added, sternly, "on the worthless and ungrateful. Come to me," she continued, in a tone less harsh, at the same time extending a hand to each of them. "Perhaps you will not find me so cruel as I appear. Do you think you can love me?"

"I will try," faintly answered Violet, "if you will let me!"

"And you?" said Mrs. Graham, addressing her sister. "I don't know," replied Maybeam, bluntly. "You look very cross. Perhaps you will beat us!"

"And if my mistress did," exclaimed Mrs. Williams, sharply—for she had taken a great dislike to the speaker—"it would be no more than you deserve! Pretty gratitude," she added, "after all the trouble we have taken in bringing you here!"

"I did not want to come!" said the child, boldly.

"Williams," interrupted the lady, "this is useless! They are too young at present to comprehend the advantage of being drawn from the life of misery and degradation from which we have saved them—in time they will feel differently! Which is—"

She could not conclude the sentence. Some secret feeling appeared to rise in her throat, and choke the half-uttered words. The woman, however, perfectly understood the question she would have asked, for she silently pointed to Violet.

"Are you sure?" added the speaker.

"Certain!"

"Remember, that the least error would be fatal to my project!"

Calling Violet to her, Mrs. Williams stripped the frock from her right shoulder, and pointed to a peculiar mark, which the child must have been born with. It was a deep claret stain, bearing a fanciful resemblance to a small bunch of grapes.

Apparently Mrs. Graham needed no other proof—for she clasped the wondering infant to her bosom, and kissed her with passionate fondness on the cheek.

"You may take that child with you," she said, pointing to Maybeam. "She can remain in your room, but Violet will stay with me."

"If Violet stays," exclaimed her sister, "I will stay, too!"

"Will!" repeated Mrs. Williams, seizing her rudely by the arm; "pretty words, indeed, for such a beggar's brat. You will come with me, miss, if you please."

Despite her cries and resistance, she succeeded in dragging her towards the door of the apartment, when Violet, springing from the embrace in which the mistress of the manor-house still retained her, threw her arms round the neck of her sister, and declared that if Maybeam left, she would go, too.

"What!" said the domestic, "and leave this fine place?"

"Yes."

"And the kind lady who loves you, miss?"

"Maybeam loves me," replied the child; "pray let us go! I hate this place!"

"Perhaps you hate me?" observed Mrs. Graham, somewhat bitterly.

Violet could only falter that she loved her sister.

To avoid further contention, they were both permitted to retire from the presence of the lady, whose harsh, peremptory manner had so terrified them; and, after supping with the housekeeper, retired to the same room. Mrs. Williams, by way of precaution, carefully locked the door, and put the key in her pocket.

Although so young, it was singular to notice the determination with which the children refused to be separated from each other; even the pertinacity of the waiting-woman at last gave way, and she agreed, with her mistress, that they should receive the same instruction, and be treated in every respect on an equality.

For several hours daily they were compelled to receive the instructions of Caleb Brown, who undertook the office of schoolmaster—their ignorance, as Mrs. Williams used to observe, was really shocking—they did not even know their letters. The patience of the old man triumphed at last over their repugnance to learn. Violet speedily mastered the difficulties of the alphabet, and Maybeam became reconciled to her tasks, because her sister shared them with her. Weeks elapsed before they were permitted to quit the house—but even then their walks, by Mrs. Graham's direction, were confined to the grounds, which were surrounded by high walls, and one or other of the domestics invariably accompanied them. They had strict orders never to permit them out of their sight a single instant.

The fanciful names by which they had hitherto been designated were gradually dropped. Violet was taught to answer the name of Mary, and Maybeam to call herself by the equally simple one of Jane—by which appellations we shall for the future style them.

Under the severe but well-regulated discipline of the manor-house, the recollections of their former life gradually became more and more indistinct. Mrs. Williams was shocked much less frequently than at first, with the wild, boisterous mirth of Jane—not that she liked her the more on that account—rather less; and Mary fell into those quiet, graceful manners so rarely met with, but so pleasing in children.

In all but their affection for each other they were changed. If at times some chord was struck, or idea of the past awakened, the impression was faint as the recollection of a half-remembered dream. If they spoke upon the subject, it was to themselves—they had no other confidants, no other sympathisers.

CHAPTER XV.

If thou art rich, thou art poor—
For, like an ass whose back with ingot bows,
Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey—
And death unleads thee. *Shakespeare.*

ALTHOUGH Lawyer Quirk had been most persevering in his inquiries, he had never succeeded in obtaining the least clue to the retreat of Lady Briancourt, who continued to receive, through her London bankers, not only the revenues of Broadlands, which her father had willed to her for life, but the large jointure which, by her marriage settlements, she was entitled to from the estates of her late husband.

Her worthless son—the present baronet—still remained abroad; leaving his wife and heir to the care of his father-in-law—who contrived, amid the wreck of the property, to look after their interests.

Another of his calculations had failed—despite the large sum of money he had expended, and the numerous agents he had employed, he had never been able to discover the least trace of the lost child of Clara Briancourt; and lived in hourly danger of retribution from the indignation of her husband, should he ever return to England—an event which he considered far from improbable.

He was seated one morning, as usual, at his desk, when Mr. Snape, his confidential clerk, entered the inner office, and announced Lord Moretown, a nobleman whose affairs had long been in the hands of Lawyer Quirk; no wonder they did not prosper.

After having carefully glanced over the table, to ascertain that certain papers had been removed, he directed his lordship to be admitted.

"A ravell'd affair!" he muttered, as the clerk left the room. "I might have made ten thousand more by the silly peer, at least, if he had taken my advice. He is ruined—ruined!"

For one who had just been pronounced a ruined man, by such an excellent authority as the speaker, Lord Moretown made a very extraordinary appearance in the world. For dress and equipage he was unrivalled in taste and magnificence. His mansion in Park-lane was the admiration of all who visited it. To hereditary rank he had added hereditary wealth, was neither a gambler nor a debaucher; and yet one weakness had ruined him—he was ambitious. The vanity of being considered the head of a party, which by no possible combination could arrive at power, had induced him to encumber his estates. At every general election fresh sacrifices had to be made to support his nominees, till, with a large nominal rent-roll, he became a poor and embarrassed man.

His lordship, who was still in the prime of life, had for some years been a widower, with an only son.

"Well, Quirk," said the peer, as he threw himself, with a nervous, impatient air into the seat which the lawyer obsequiously placed for him, "I suppose you have heard the news?"

"Another dissolution, my lord?"

"You have guessed it," replied his visitor, in a tone of mingled satisfaction and embarrassment. "After last night's vote, it is impossible that Lickwell could continue to conduct the government with the present House of Commons. The contest will be a desperate one!"

Quirk shrugged his shoulders.

"I shall require an advance—rather a large one. Greyling and Gnatier—the names of his nominees for the family borough—" must be supported. The Whigs," he added, bitterly, "threaten an opposition; and since I have been compelled to grant leases, my rascally tenants prate of principles and independence."

"And may I ask, my lord," said the lawyer, seating himself, "how much your lordship will require?"

"Thirty thousand, at the very least," was the reply. Quirk shook his head. He knew that the life interest of the speaker in the estates was no longer worth half the sum.

"What a pity!" he observed.

"What is a pity?" impatiently demanded the peer.

"That the viscount is not of age," answered his adviser; "for, under present circumstances, it will be impossible to procure the money. I had the greatest difficulty in obtaining the last ten thousand for your lordship."

The Earl of Moretown started from his seat, and paced the room for some minutes in fretful silence. Never had he been so near—at least in his excited imagination—grasping the reins of power; and, after so many sacrifices, to be baffled—defeated for the want of a few paltry thousands! for so he mentally designated the enormous sum he required to defeat the machinations of his enemies in the family borough.

"Would not Mr. Arden—" he at length inquired.

"Mr. Arden," interrupted Quirk, "will not lend another shilling; indeed, it required all my influence to obtain the last advance. The money which he has already lent is not his own."

"Not his own?" repeated his visitor; "why I thought that he was rich!"

"And so he is," continued the man of law; "fearfully rich. He holds mortgages on half the county of

Essex, yet he denies himself the common necessities of life. He would not give a sixpence to save his nearest relative from the poor-house. Judge what chance, therefore, there is, my lord, of his lending money without security. The enormous sum he has already lent forms a portion of his daughter's fortune."

"A portion?" slowly repeated his visitor.

"A portion only!" continued Quirk; "the rest is in the hands of a relative of the young lady—a Mr. Brindley, the rich goldsmith in the city, from whom her father has vainly attempted to obtain it."

"And how old is Miss Arden?" inquired the peer, with a well-assumed air of indifference.

"About four-and-twenty, my lord."

"Her fortune at her own disposal?"

"Entirely, my lord."

"She is fortunate!" exclaimed the nobleman, with a sigh. Then, as if he had dismissed the subject from his mind, he added, "I will see Howard and Granville—our interests are identical—perhaps they may suggest some means by which the difficulty may be obviated; for, no matter what the sacrifice, the money must be had within a month at latest."

So saying, the embarrassed nobleman took his leave, with a half-familiar, half-condescending nod to his legal adviser.

"Howard! Granville!" slowly repeated Mr. Quirk; "pooh! they are as poor, or nearly so, as himself. He has merely named them to mask some other design. What can it be?"

"I have it!" he exclaimed, after some minutes' deep reflection; "a bold stroke, if he succeeds, but one that will cover him with ridicule and shame should it prove a failure! That man would have made a better lawyer than politician—but people will mistake their vocation!"

With this reflection, he resumed the examination of the papers upon the desk, which the visit of the peer had interrupted.

Although nearly two years had elapsed since the visit of Mabel to the house of the miser, little change had taken place either in the condition or feelings of its inmates. Nicholas Arden still continued eagerly as ever to accumulate wealth, and his daughter to endure the lonely, cheerless existence to which her father's avarice had from infancy condemned her.

As for Goliath, he had long since disappeared from the establishment—his young mistress, out of pity, having recommended him to her relative, the wealthy goldsmith, in London—who, finding him honest and persevering, employed him as porter in his shop—and the poor fellow was grateful. He almost worshipped his new master, who might have trusted him with anything save food. The appetite of Nicholas Arden for gold did not exceed that of his former servant for the good things which were set before him in Lombard-street.

Alice Arden, too, had insisted upon a somewhat more liberal expenditure in the household of her father, whose gaunt frame showed the fearful privations to which for many years he had subjected himself. With the money which she drew regularly for that purpose from her relative in Lombard-street, she provided plainly but wholesomely for their daily table; the old man was in agonies at the unwonted extravagance. At times he even raved at and bitterly cursed her, vowing that she would become at last a beggar upon his hands.

The miser would rather have seen her dead than guilty of the monstrous crime of spending a shilling.

One evening, after a scene of more than usual violence, in which her father had reproached her with the sinful waste of buying meat twice in the same week, the old man left the house. A chill of apprehension fell upon the heart of his daughter as she saw him depart—for his manner had suddenly changed from extreme wrath to deep sullenness—ever the precursor, with Nicholas Arden, of some desperate resolution.

"He has called me a bad, ungrateful child!" murmured the poor girl, repeating the bitter words he had uttered to herself: "God help me—I am sure my heart is not naturally ungrateful! I could have loved him dearly, had he been as other parents! My youth has been blighted by his avarice—the heart's canker-worm. I have lived the life of a recluse—a slave, and never been rewarded for my submission by one smile, one caress—nothing but cold looks, and yet colder words! He has seen the bloom of health fade from my cheek, my eyes grow dim—and never once relaxed. I believe," she added, with a sigh, "that he would rather see me in my coffin, than expend a single coin of his hoarded treasure!"

Finding it impossible to dissipate the deep depression which weighed like a nightmare upon her spirits, Alice Arden drew from the closet in her sitting-room the old, faded cloak in which she occasionally visited the neighbouring church of St. John; and, drawing the hood over her head, left the house to breathe the evening air; the atmosphere of the closely shut up mansion was oppressive and heavy.

She had not walked far, before she encountered two or three drunken men, and would have drawn on one

side to avoid them; but one of the fellows noticed her, and, darting across the road, threw his arm round her waist, declaring that he would have a kiss from the miser's daughter.

"Release me!" exclaimed the poor girl, faintly; "why should you insult me? I have never injured you!"

"Insult you!" repeated the fellow, with a real or pretended hiccup; "how long has stealing a kiss from a pretty girl been called an insult?"

"Bring her to the light!" shouted one of his companions, and let's have a peep at her!"

Despite her resistance, they dragged her to a distant lamp-post, and succeeded in tearing the hood from her pale countenance. But before they could proceed to further outrage, a gentleman, plainly dressed, who had been watching their proceedings, darted forward, and, using his cane with hearty good-will, soon put her assailants to flight—leaving poor Alice half-fainting in his arms.

"Bless you, sir—bless you!" she faltered; "believe me I am not the degraded thing the conduct of those men would lead you to suppose!"

"It would require something more than the outrage of an unmanly ruffian," answered the stranger, in a deep, musical voice, "to induce me to entertain a degrading suspicion of Miss Arden!"

"You know me, sir?"

"Yes—I have seen and admired you very often."

"Seen me?" repeated Alice, blushing deeply—for it was the first time, perhaps, in her life, that words of compliment or flattery had been addressed to her. "Where?"

"At the neighbouring church, where I am a frequent attendant. How often," he added, "have I regretted that the world's cold forms rendered an introduction impossible! You visit so little!"

Alice sighed—she knew not why. But the words of the speaker began to awaken a strange feeling in her heart. It was like melody drawn from a lute whose chords had never been struck before.

"Will you permit me to see you home?" he said; "merely to the gate," he added; "I am aware that Nicholas Arden receives few visitors, unless they come to augment his store—and I am neither a borrower nor a lender."

It was impossible to refuse a request, which the agitation she had so recently endured rendered a mark of humanity, more than idle courtesy. Alice accepted it. Although they had not far to walk, the stranger succeeded, by the manly delicacy of his manner and conversation, in interesting her more deeply than she had ever been before.

"Farewell!" he said, as they stopped before the strongly-barred gate of the miser's house. "I could almost rejoice in the adventure of this evening, since it has given me the right of thinking that I have been of service to you!"

"You have, indeed!" answered Miss Arden, gratefully.

Still she lingered. There was an attraction in the stranger's manner which fascinated her. It was not beauty of person—for he was evidently no longer young; it was that respectful earnestness—that tone of manly protection, kindness, and sympathy—which goes further to win the heart of woman than the puppyism of fashion, or the affectation of refinement. Nor was it till the approaching footsteps of her father warned her of the indiscretion she was committing, that Alice hastily bade him good-night, and darted into the house.

"She will be at the church to-morrow night!" thought the stranger, as a cold smile of satisfaction played upon his features; "and if she is, the game will be in my own hands! Poor girl! she is wretchedly uninformed, and terribly insipid. An awful sacrifice," he added; "an awful sacrifice!"

Such was the judgment which the stranger mentally pronounced upon Alice Arden; a girl whose heart was pure as an angel's smile—rich in the latent feelings which make life's music—a frozen flower, which the genial sun of love and sympathy might yet recall to joyous, fresh existence.

As Nicholas Arden, with slow and measured tread, approached the spot where the gentleman was standing, the latter drew back, and pulled his hat over his brows, to avoid recognition. The old man eyed him suspiciously; but, as he was too well dressed for a robber, he passed on to his securely-barred den—and once within, drew lock and bolt behind him.

"Humph!" he ejaculated, as he entered the lower room, in which Alice was still seated—her cloak, which had been torn in the struggle, hanging partially over her shoulders. "Have you been abroad?"

"I have," said his daughter.

"And are but just returned," continued the old man, sharply.

"Scarcely a minute since. I encountered in the lane some rude and drunken persons, who insulted me. But for the protection of a gentleman who was passing at the time, I should not have escaped them."

Her father eyed her searchingly for a few moments

—not that he doubted the truth of her statement—he knew that Alice never descended to falsehood; but he wished, if possible, to ascertain the impression which the adventure had made upon her mind. This, without intending to deceive him, his daughter, with the tact and intuitive delicacy of her sex, concealed—she could scarcely have done otherwise—for as yet she was ignorant of the nature of her feelings to the stranger.

"No wonder that I am insulted," observed the poor girl, bitterly; "my appearance would excite charity in the kind—mirth in the rude and scornful!"

"Pshaw!" interrupted the old man, yet not altogether angrily—for his suspicions were entirely dissipated; "thou shalt have a new cloak soon. But what are the vanities of apparel, delicate food, and lodging to the real purpose of life? gold, girl—gold! The sceptre is only powerful because it is made of it. It is the rod which rules earth's masters!"

"A slavist, one!" said Alice.

"No matter," said her father, "since men bow to it! Think you," he said, "there is no pleasure in being rich, beyond the contemplation of the glittering coin? There is—ay, and a poetry in it worth all the rhymester's verse! In my strong chest I have a fleet at anchor which many a prince might envy—an army such as few powers could raise! Gold is—all that it can procure! I prefer the essence of things," he added, "to their gross reality—therefore men call me miser!"

"And what will heaven call thee, father?" demanded Alice Arden, raising her hand, and pointing on high.

A dark scowl flitted for an instant over the countenance of the old man, and he left the room. The question had awakened unpleasant thoughts, which the sight of his yellow idol only could allay; he remained, therefore, during the greater part of the night locked in his chamber, counting over his gold.

Whatever the stranger's motives, he at least was right in his calculation. Alice Arden was at the church of St. John the following evening, and for several evenings afterwards. Nearly a week elapsed, however, before he ventured to speak of love. It was the first time the theme had been whispered in the ear of the artless girl and she welcomed it as freely as the song-bird does the note of his first mate.

His object was to fascinate her by the display of feelings which he smiled at—of virtues and sentiments which he had long since pronounced ridiculous for a man of the world.

Still he hesitated to speak of marriage—not that his views were of a dishonourable nature—at least in the eyes of the world, which holds it as no dishonour to feign a passion—to woo fortune through the misery of its possessor—to cheat affection, by offering a false coin in exchange.

"You are unhappy, Alice!" he said, as they lingered in the churchyard one evening, after the service; "and I am scarcely less so. Would that your father had been poor—then he could not have suspected my motives in seeking your hand! Frankly I might have invited you to share my honest competency! How long is this indecision to last?"

His companion remained silent.

"Think you," he continued, "if I renounced all right of inheriting any portion of his wealth, he would be moved?"

The artless girl, struck by the seeming generosity of such a sacrifice, looked up confidently in his face.

"And could you do so?" she timidly made answer.

"Could I!" repeated the dissembler; "willingly—cheerfully! I have frequently told you, Alice, that I am not rich; but I have enough to provide a home of peace and happiness for one who could be content to share it with me. I had rather," he added, "much rather—that the woman I married should be poor. It would be my delight to raise her from poverty and obscurity to comfort—to prove her guide and friend through life. Believe me, my sweet girl, the only bond of gold between two hearts like ours should be the simple wedding ring!"

This seeming generosity on the part of the speaker answered two purposes. It effectually checked the confession which already trembled on the lips of Alice, that she was rich, independent of her father, and flattered her woman's pride of being loved for herself alone. It also prevented his principles from being put to the test, by making any settlement of that fortune on herself.

At last he ventured to suggest how easy it would be for them to unite their faith without the knowledge of Mr. Arden, whose anger would soon, he urged, give way, when he found that it was his daughter's hand, and not the miser's fortune, which he coveted.

"You do not know him!" replied the poor girl, blushing deeply; "his wrath would be terrible!"

"More terrible," answered her lover, "than the lonely existence which you have hitherto led—debarred from the amusements so natural to your age—intercourse with the world, the society of your own sex, the natural tastes and refinements of a heart like yours?"

Why dwell upon a plea which has been so often urged by lovers, and listened to by women? Although Alice did not positively consent to wed the man who had obtained such influence over her heart—she promised to reflect on what he had said, and give him an answer in three days.

"Three days!" he repeated; "it is an age!"

"Which will soon pass," replied Miss Arden, thoughtfully. "I know little of the world; but something whispers me, the step you urge me to take is an unusual one—the circumstances in which I am placed with my parent may palliate, but cannot justify it! Leave me now," she continued, "I have need of reflection and prayer! I feel that I have no right longer to trifle with your feelings, however I may sacrifice my own—in three days you shall have my answer."

Bidding him good-night, Alice Arden left the churchyard and hurried home, fearful lest her father should have returned before her; but nearly an hour elapsed before he made his appearance; when he did, his daughter felt alarmed, for his features were haggard and unusually pale.

"You are ill, father?" she said.

The old man groaned bitterly.

"There is food in the house—let me set it before you!"

"More extravagance!" exclaimed Nicholas, passionately. "I cannot eat, when I know that every morsel costs the money which I have passed years of toil to accumulate!"

"You forget, father," said Alice, soothingly, "this has been bought with the money which my kinsman sends—no coin of yours!"

"I know!" interrupted the miser; "the money which your mother robbed me of!"

"Robbed you, father?"

"Ay—does not the fortune of the wife belong, in justice and religion, to her husband? What do women know of how to manage gold? They fool it for a soft word or an empty smile! I repeat it," he added, furiously; "she robbed me of it, and you would do the same! Curse you! I curse ye both!"

"Father!" exclaimed Alice, rising from her seat with indignation; "does not the word bluster your tongue? Curse her! curse the being who sacrificed her youth—the world—to make you happy—whose heart you froze by coldness and unkindness—and when it was turned to ice, broke! Shame—shame! Bend your knees, old man," she added, bursting into tears, "and ask Heaven to pardon you the slander of the angel you have sent there!"

Startled by the unusual vehemence of her manner, Nicholas Arden quitted the room, muttering, as he went, something about his gold—that he would not be robbed of his darling gold.

If at that moment the stranger had been there to press his suit, I question if Alice Arden would have said him nay—her heart was seared by the unkind words and insult offered to the memory of her mother—the only being who had ever truly loved her.

At an early hour the following morning the miser left his house, and directed his way to the shop of a chemist in the High Street. It was something so unusual for him to enter a shop of any kind, that the customers who were being served drew back, curious to hear what brought him there.

"Have you any poison?" demanded the old man.

"Poison!" repeated the astonished chemist; "yes—certainly, sir; but we don't usually sell it, unless to—"

"Kill rats and vermin," added Mr. Arden; "a fit and just precaution; that is exactly the purpose for which I require it!"

"You!" exclaimed the man, with a look of astonishment; "is your house troubled with rats? You surprise me!"

"Why so?"

"Because I never heard before that they fed upon gold!"

"You, too, I perceive," retorted the miser, sharply, "participate in the common error that I am rich!"

The tradesman bowed, and smiled.

"Have you any objection to furnish me with what I require?"

"Oh, none—none in the least!" answered the chemist, taking down a bottle, labelled "arsenic," and proceeding to weigh a small quantity. "There is no fear that you would employ it for any improper purpose!"

"I should think not!" said the miser, with a sickly smile; "and yet strange accidents do sometimes occur!"

The chemist directed the old man to spread the poison upon a slice of bread-and-butter, and place it in the way of the rats—assuring him that a very short time would thin his house of the annoyance.

Nicholas Arden paid without murmuring—a most unusual thing for him—for the drug; and, with a thoughtful air, directed his steps towards home.

Various were the comments made by the customers in the shop after his departure. The idea of rats haunt-

ing his house appeared so improbable! They must have been starved out long since.

It was rather later than usual that evening when Alice retired to her room. Upon the table near the window was a small plate, containing her usual supper—a slice of bread and a glass of water. Her heart was too full to eat. She was agitated by the promise she had made of giving the stranger an answer—for upon that answer depended, most probably, the happiness or misery of her existence.

Men, when they marry, have a thousand resources, should their choice prove ill-assorted or unwise. Life to them has so many occupations, pursuits, and interests—all their ties are not centered round the domestic hearth. But to the wife, home is her world. She is at once its mistress and its slave. An iron law makes her the property of him she weds—a thing to trample upon and oppress, or love and cherish, according to the temper of his mind.

The husband who flies from his home, in nine cases out of ten, is pitied. The wife who abandons hers, is universally condemned; and by none more severely than by her own sex, who have done more to rivet the chain which binds them, by the want of charity they show to their unhappy sisters.

"Poor old man!" she sighed—for her thoughts were of her father; "it will be a sad blow to him. If he loves me not, I at least am useful to him. Perhaps when he finds himself abandoned to this wretched solitude, he may regret the fate of his lost child, and feel he might have treated her less harshly! Can I abandon him?" she added. "No! hard as my destiny is, I must bear it! The path of duty may be a rugged one, but sweet flowers are generally found towards its close!"

Alice had almost come to the resolution of refusing the hand of the stranger; not that she doubted either his affection or his honour; but from that principle of self-sacrifice which woman, with all her frailties, weaknesses, and passion, is far more capable of than lordly man.

During these reflections the poor, half-starved cat, which had followed her into the room, and been purring round her, impelled by hunger, had leaped upon the table, and began to devour voraciously the supper of Alice.

"Take it all, puss," said the unhappy girl, when she perceived the petty theft, at the same time placing her plate upon the ground: "I shall not need it."

The hungry animal soon finished its contents. That night Nicholas Arden could not sleep—his heart and brain both seemed on fire. He tried to dissipate the thoughts and pale images of terror which crowded upon his brain, by counting his worshipped gold; but for once the idol had lost its power of fascination. He absolutely turned from the clink of the yellow metal—hitherto the only music of his existence—and listened. The house was silent as the tomb.

"Perhaps she sleeps," he murmured, and will pass away without consciousness or suffering—it may not be too late. I will arouse her—warn—confess everything to her."

Full of this new-born remorse, he advanced towards the door, when the recollection struck him that he was about to leave his darling gold upon the table—no one to guard it. True, he and Alice were alone in the house—still it was unguarded. He turned, with the intention of replacing it in his strong cabinet, when the sight of the glittering piles of coin upset his resolution, and throwing himself upon the table, as if to shield it with his body, he embraced the senseless metal, for the barren possession of which he had sacrificed so many true enjoyments.

"Let her die!" he exclaimed, as he mentally counted the piles; "she would leave me! rob me of my gold! Mine—mine—despite the folly of her mother—the malice of her uncle!"

This was in allusion to the last will of his wife, who, despite his threats and prayers, had shortly before her death, placed the half of her immense fortune in the hands of her relative, the goldsmith of Lombard-street, in trust for her only child; the other half Nicholas Arden had for many years possessed the use of, and, as Quirk had stated to Lord Moretown, lent it upon the security of his estates.

After re-counting his treasure, the miser replaced it in the iron-bound oaken cabinet, carefully locked the door, and thrust the key into his bosom; for more than thirty years he had been accustomed to sleep with it: he could not rest unless he felt the heavy iron next the shrivelled, selfish thing he called his heart.

Seating himself in his chair, he resolved to watch during the rest of the night; sleep he well knew would be impossible—for the excitement he endured was terrible. For once he resolved to be guilty of the extravagance of permitting the lamp to burn till morning. He dreaded darkness, and yet the material darkness would have been as the blaze of day, compared to the moral gloom in which his soul was plunged.

Never had the hours appeared so long and tedious. More than once he quitted his chamber, crept with noiseless step to the door of his daughter's room, and listened with breathless suspense and agony at the door

—but was unable to detect a sound. He would have knocked—but what excuse had he for disturbing her if she slept? If dead, it was too soon to make the discovery.

"I must be cautious!" he said; "for curious eyes will be upon me! Why do I tremble? Have I not holy writ to prove that the father has a right to sacrifice his child—even when obedient? Isaac was obedient, and so was Japhet's daughter! How much more so when they rebel against us!"

With this sophistry he endeavoured to delude himself into the belief that the foul act he contemplated was justified! How beautifully has Shakespeare described the feelings and conduct of such a character, when he says:—

An evil soul producing Holy Writ
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek—
A goodly apple, rotten at the core;
Oh, what a goodly outside falsehood hath.

Daylight dawned at last; still the miser so far mastered the nervous feeling of impatience which was consuming him as to wait till the usual hour, before he approached the door of his daughter's chamber. At last, however, he did so, knocked, and called upon her by name. There was no reply.

"Alice—Alice!" he repeated.

The old man turned the lock. It was securely fastened on the inside.

"That is fortunate!" he said, with a smile of mingled terror and satisfaction; "and must avert suspicion! Now, then, to give the alarm!"

It was near the hour of eight when Nicholas Arden, his white hair streaming in the breeze, his countenance pale and haggard, rushed into the street. The first person he encountered was Mr. Frost, a magistrate, who had long been under pecuniary obligations to him.

"Heavens, Mr. Arden!" he exclaimed, "what is the matter?"

"My daughter!" faltered the miser, with well-dissembled grief.

"Ill?"

"Dead, I fear; I have called, as usual, at her door, and cannot make her hear! Alice—my dear, dear child!"

"It must be broken open," observed the gentleman, "and assistance procured; and see," he said—pointing to the porch of St. John's church—fortunately here comes Dr. Girkins, as usual, from morning prayers!"

The medical man listened to their story with a calmness which astonished both the magistrate and Nicholas Arden, for he had the reputation of being not only a clever practitioner, but a kind-hearted man.

"I am happy to be able to relieve your apprehension," he said, addressing the miser. "Miss Arden, I can assure you, is in no danger."

"What mean you?" demanded the old man. "I tell you that she is in her chamber—the door fast locked—that nothing can arouse her. She is ill—dying, perhaps."

"And I tell you," said Doctor Girkins, looking at his watch, "that although Miss Arden no longer exists, she is not dead—seeing that by this time she is married to the gentleman whom I left her standing with at the altar!"

With a yell of rage and surprise, Nicholas Arden darted into the church, followed by Mr. Frost and his informant. The clergyman had just closed the book as they entered.

"My child!" cried the miser. "Give me back my child!"

"This is most irregular!" observed the magistrate, addressing the curate who had officiated. "Such a marriage, without the consent of her father, is anything but legal! I feel it to be my duty to direct that the lady be given up to—"

"Back, sir!" exclaimed the stranger, to the little, puffy magistrate, who was advancing towards his bride; "that lady is now my wife—a peeress of England—Countess of Moretown!"

No sooner did the miser hear the name of the Earl of Moretown, than he fell upon his knees in the sacred edifice, and bitterly cursed his child. He would rather have seen her dead than wedded to any man—but above all to him—it was restitution—parting with his treasure.

"God will not hear you, father!" said Alice, mournfully, as soon as the surprise which she felt at the announcement of her new dignity would permit her to speak; "rather thank Him that in His mercy He has spared you a foul crime!"

Slowly rising from his knees, the old man left the church with a bitter scowl.

(To be continued.)

It is announced that the silver bars, valued at nearly £30,000, taken out of the American ship, B. F. Hoxie, bound to England, by the Confederate steamer Florida, which afterwards burnt the vessel, has arrived at Liverpool, from Bermuda, and, it is reported, will be restored to the original consignees. The silver was shipped

by an English house, and was insured in the City to the full amount. It is also stated that the commander of the Florida, on hearing this fact, resolved to restore it to the rightful owner.

ON THE UNFAVOURABLE INFLUENCE OF SUDDEN CHANGE OF CLIMATE.

I AM not aware that the attention of the profession has yet been drawn to the unfavourable influence exercised upon health by the sudden change from a northern to a southern, or from a southern to a northern climate, so constantly experienced in these railroad days. And yet this influence exists, even for the strong and well, and is still more decided in the case of invalids. It ought, therefore, to be recognized and taken into consideration by those who send patients abroad, in order that they may instil caution into their minds, and point out the mode in which any bad effects from the change of climate may be avoided.

During the last few years I have four times left England in October, arriving within a week or ten days in the south of Europe, at Mentone; and four times I have left Mentone in May, and arrived soon afterwards in England. At Mentone I am at once called upon to take charge of a number of fellow-countrymen, winter emigrants like myself. On my return to London I see many of them as they arrive or pass through, or hear of them if they, as often occurs, pass to other allegiance. The autumn and spring illnesses from which they often suffer did not at first strike me as presenting anything peculiar; but gradually, as experience has increased, I have become aware, firstly, that these morbid accidents present themselves each year with stereotyped regularity; and secondly, that they are, in a great measure, referable to the sudden change of climate rendered possible by rapid railway communication, of which advantage is taken owing to the very natural desire to get over the journey as quickly as possible.

The most marked peculiarity of our climate, as distinguished from that of the continent of Europe, and especially from that of the Mediterranean basin, is the great quantity of vapour which our atmosphere contains. According to Admiral Smythe, the atmosphere of England contains habitually double that of the Mediterranean region. His data are substantiated by a series of observations which I made last winter with the wet and dry bulb thermometers at Mentone. I found the difference between the two was nearly always throughout the winter very great, generally varying from five to ten degrees Fahrenheit. We have the proof also of this fact in our white-blue cloudy sky, and in our mitigated summer heat. The watery vapour screens the earth from the sun, and absorbs its heat; and hence, in part, our mild summers. The absence, or the sooner diminished amount, of this watery vapour in the atmosphere of the Mediterranean region gives a dryness, a clearness, an elasticity to the air which is very peculiar. It enables the light and heat of the sun more easily to reach the earth, and accounts for the clear deep blue of the sky and for the scorching heat of the sun's rays even in midwinter. As a necessary corollary, the nights are clear, brilliantly illuminated by stars and moon, and cold by comparison with the day.

Professor Tyndall, in his lecture on "Heat considered as a mode of Action," recently delivered at the Royal Institution, has shown more clearly than any of his predecessors how great is the heat-absorbing power of aqueous vapour, and its consequent influence upon climate. The heat-absorbing power of moist air varies with its density. It is as high as ninety-eight when the barometer is at thirty inches, and but sixteen when the barometrical pressure is only five inches. Thus the nearer the aqueous vapour is to the earth, where the barometrical pressure is the greatest, the greater its heat-absorbing power, and the greater the protection it affords from the scorching effect of the sun's rays during the day, or from extreme radiation of heat during the night. Professor Tyndall applies these facts by stating that the removal for a single summer night of the aqueous vapour from the atmosphere of England would be attended by the destruction of every plant which a freezing temperature could kill. On the other hand, the day would be as scorching as the night would be cold.

These facts give us the key to the Mediterranean climate—to its hot sunshine during the day in winter, and to its cool nights. The diminution of aqueous vapour in the atmosphere, on the one hand, allows the sun's rays to reach the earth during the day; and, on the other, allows the earth's heat to radiate rapidly into space at night.

In October invalids leave England's moist atmosphere, when the weather is already getting cold, and the evenings and mornings are foggy. The express train is often taken at Paris for Marseilles, and in sixteen or twenty hours the dry sunny Mediterranean region is reached. There it is still summer; the sun is powerful; the temperature high, usually above 70 deg. Fahr. The liver and skin, which were already in England

relieved from the stimulus of our mild summer heat, are called violently and suddenly into action. The result is diarrhoea, bilious attacks more or less severe, skin irritation, urticaria, boils, &c. Diarrhoea is so common that few northerners escape; and it is universally, and erroneously I believe, attributed to change of food, to wine, and to such influences.

These attacks are most severe with those who hurry their departure from England, push rapidly to their destination, and reach the south in September or early in October. In my opinion the last week of October is quite early enough for invalids, or even healthy northerners, to arrive in the south of Europe. The cool weather of autumn does not begin until about the second week in November; and a month or six weeks of hot, oppressive southern weather, with a liberal allowance of mosquitoes, is generally damaging to the health of "north country people." The worst cases of bilious derangement that I have to attend each autumn are amongst such.

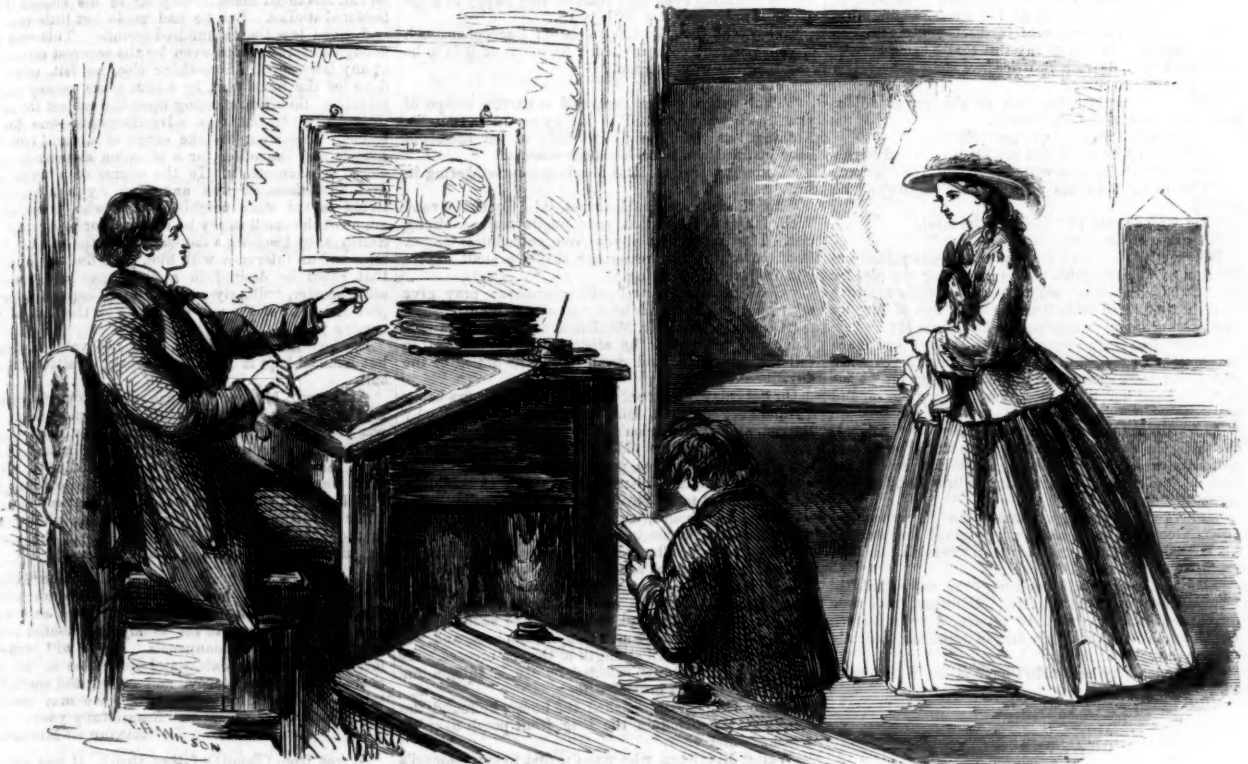
By the end of April or the early days of May the sheltered Riviera undercliff begins to be disagreeably warm. Moreover, fine midsummer weather has been enjoyed so long that it becomes difficult to believe that winter still reigns in the north. The invalids are tired, also, of their six months' absence from home, and their hearts are set on the return. Once the homeward journey has commenced it is generally rapidly carried on, and many arrive in Paris or in England early in May, much too soon for their own good. In the north of Europe, if the wind is from the south, in April and May the air is mild and balmy, and vegetation makes rapid strides; but until the mountain lands of Norway and Sweden are freed, or partly so, from their canopy of snow, which does not take place until June, a north-east wind brings cold, chilly weather, and night frosts. It is this cold, chilly atmosphere, an atmosphere, too, more or less loaded with moisture, that often meets the invalid on his return home. The skin and liver, previously in full operation, are checked suddenly if the journey has been a rapid one, extra work is thrown on the lungs and kidneys, and very often severe attacks of influenza, of coryza, of bronchitis, of hæmoptysis, are the result.

I have pointed out the evil, I must now point out the remedy. It is to ignore the facilities afforded by express trains, and to make both the southern and the northern journeys in such a manner as to become acclimatized to the great changes.

Serious invalids who intend to winter in the south of Europe, are better out of England the last week in September, or early in October; but, as we have seen, their winter residence is scarcely fit for them before the end of October. The two, three, or four intervening weeks should be spent on the road. A quiet, leisurely progress southward allows the human economy to gradually accustom itself to the change of climate. A favourite station with me is Fontainebleau, thirty miles south of Paris. The climate is continental, drier than that of England, the hotels are good, and the forest scenery is very interesting and beautiful. A week or ten days may be spent there both pleasantly and profitably for health, much more so than in Paris.

Further south we have Valence, Aix Nîmes, Arles, &c. I would, however, more especially recommend a small watering-place which I may nearly lay claim to have discovered, as far as my countrymen are concerned. It is Gréoulx, a five hours' picturesque drive from Aix-en-Provence. Gréoulx is merely a village, with a large comfortable hotel, in its own grounds, erected over a hot sulphur spring, one of the most powerful and longest known thermal waters of the south of France. Its celebrity, however, is all but entirely confined to that part of France. I myself found it out by the map, whilst trying to discover an autumn and spring intermediary station. I visited it last May, and was much pleased with the scenery from Aix, with the hotel and its grounds, and with the very lovely district in which it is situated. There are two wild mountain rivers—the Durance and one of its tributaries—within a mile of the house, and fishing and shooting are provided for the inmates, with all the resources of French social country life. The hotel makes up some 200 beds. Gréoulx is quite out of the beaten track, far away from railways, amongst the hills of Provence, and a residence there must have many charms. I sent a little colony of my Mentone friends and patients there this spring, and they were all delighted with it.

The same course can be followed by invalids on their return north. The departure from Mentone, Nice, Cannes, or from Italy or Spain, can take place at the end of April, or on the first day of May; and a leisurely journey may be made towards the north, so as to reach England by the end of May or the first day of June. Gréoulx is open on the 1st of May, and is even thus early very lovely; the deciduous trees in full leaf, and the nightingale in full song. A fortnight at Gréoulx, a week at Fontainebleau, and May is pleasantly consumed, and England and its climate reached by slow stages, which neutralize the risks attendant upon the "cannon-ball" style of travelling.—Dr. J. H. Bennett.



[ISHMAEL RECEIVES AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.]

SELF-MADE;

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

By MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "The Lost Heiress," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XLVIII.
ONWARD.

The boldness and the quiet,
That calmly go ahead,
In spite of wrath and riot,
In spite of quick and dead—
Warm energy to spur him,
Keen enterprise to guide,
And conscience to stir him,
And duty by his side,
And hope for ever singing
Assurance of success,
And rapid action springing
At once to nothing less!

M. F. Tupper.

In this persevering labour, Ishmael cheerfully passed the winter months.

He had not heard one word of Claudia, or of her father, except such scant news as reached him through the judge's occasional letters to Reuben Gray.

He had received an encouraging note from Mr. Middleton in answer to the letter he had written to that gentleman. About the 1st of April Ishmael's first quarterly school bills began to be due.

Tuition fees were not high in that poor neighbourhood, and his pay for each pupil averaged about ten shillings. His school numbered thirty pupils, and about one-third of these never paid. Not very encouraging this, yet Ishmael was pleased and happy, especially as he felt that he was really doing the little savages entrusted to his care a great deal of good.

Half of this money Ishmael would have forced upon Hannah and Reuben; but Hannah flew into a passion and demanded to be informed if her nephew took her for a money grub; and Reuben quietly assured the young man that his services overpaid his board; which was quite true.

One evening about the middle of April, Ishmael sat at his school desk mending pens, setting copies, and keeping an eye on a refractory boy who had been detained after school hours to learn a lesson he had failed to know in his class.

Ishmael had just finished setting his last copy, and was engaged in piling the copy-books neatly, one on top of another, when there came a soft tap at the door.

"Come in," said Ishmael, fully expecting to see some of the refractory boy's friends come to inquire after him.

The door opened, and a very young lady in a grey silk dress, straw hat and blue ribbons, entered the schoolroom.

Ishmael looked up, gave one glance at the fair, sweet face, serious blue eyes, and soft light ringlets, and dropped his copy-books, came down from his seat, and hurried to meet the visitor, exclaiming:

"Beatrice! Oh, dear, dear Beatrice, I am so glad to see you!"

"So am I you, Ishmael," said Beatrice Middleton, frankly giving her hand to be shaken.

"Beatrice! oh, I beg pardon! Miss Middleton, I mean! it is such a happiness to me to see you again!"

"So it is to me to see you, Ishmael," frankly answered Beatrice.

"You will sit down and rest, Be—Miss Middleton?" exclaimed Ishmael, running to bring his own school chair for her accommodation.

"I will sit down 'Beatrice.' None of my old schoolmates call me anything else, Ishmael, and I should hardly know my little self by any other name," she said, taking the offered seat.

"I thank you very much for letting me call you so! It really went against all old feelings of friendship to call you otherwise."

"Why, certainly it did!"

"I hope your father and all the family are well?"

"All except mamma, who, you know, is very delicate."

"Yes, I know. They are all down here, of course?"

"No; no one but myself and one man and maid servant."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; I came down to see to the last preparations, so as to have everything in order and comfortable for mamma, when she comes. I know what you were thinking of, Ishmael! That some other than myself ought to have been found to come down to this uninhabited house to make the final preparations for the reception of the family; but really now, Ishmael, when you come to think of it, *who could have been found so competent as myself for this duty?*"

"When did you reach Rushy, Beatrice?"

"Last night about seven o'clock. We spent all day in unpacking and arranging the things that had been sent down a week or two ago. And this afternoon I thought I would walk over here and see what sort of a school you had. Papa read your letter to us, and we were all interested in your success here."

"Thank you, dear Beatrice; I know that you are all among my very best friends; and some of these days, I hope, I trust, to do credit to your friendship."

"That you will, Ishmael! What do you think my papa told my Uncle Merlin?—that, 'that young man

(meaning you) was destined to make his mark on this century.'"

A deep blush of mingled pleasure, bashfulness, and aspiration mantled Ishmael's delicate face. He bowed with sweet, grave courtesy, and changed the subject of conversation, by saying:

"I hope Judge Merlin and his daughter are quite well?"

"Quite! Papa visited them for a few days last week. The judge is stopping at the Star Hotel, and Claudia is a parlour boarder at a celebrated French school. Claudia will not 'come out' until next winter, when her father goes to London. For next December Claudia will be eighteen years of age, and will enter upon her mother's large property, according to the terms of the marriage settlement and the mother's will. I suppose she will be the richest heiress in England, for the property is estimated at more than a million! Ah! it is fine to be Claudia Merlin—is it not, Ishmael?"

"Very," answered the young man, scarcely conscious, amid the whirl of his emotions, what he was saying.

"And what a sensation her *entrée* into society will make! I should like to be in London next winter when she comes out! Ah! but after all—what a target for fortune-hunters she will be, to be sure!" sighed Beatrice.

"She is beautiful and accomplished, and altogether lovely enough to be sought for herself alone!" exclaimed Ishmael, in the low and faltering tones of deep feeling.

"Ah, yes, if she were poor; but who on earth could see whether the heiress of a million were pretty or plain; good or bad; witty or stupid?"

"So young and so cynical?" said Ishmael, sadly.

"Ah, Ishmael, whoever reads and observes must feel and reflect; and whoever feels and reflects must soon lose the simple faith of childhood. We shall see!" said Beatrice, rising, and drawing her grey silk scarf around her shoulders.

"You are not going?"

"Yes; I have much yet to do."

"Can I not help you?"

"Oh, no; there is nothing that I have to do that a classical and mathematical scholar and nursing-lawyer could understand."

"Then, at least, allow me to see you safely home. The nursing-lawyer can do that, I suppose? If you will be pleased to sit down until I hear this young hopeful say his lesson, I will close the schoolroom and be at your service."

"Thank you very much; but I have to call at Brown's, the manager's, and I would much rather you

would not trouble yourself, Ishmael. Good-bye. When we all get settled up at the house, which must be by next Saturday night, at furthest, you must come often to see us. It was to say this that I came here."

"Thank you, dearest Beatrice! I shall esteem it a great privilege to come."

"Prove it," laughed Beatrice, as she waved adieu, and tripped out of the schoolroom.

Ishmael called up his pupil for recitation.

The little fellow could not say his lesson, and began to weep and rub his eyes with the sleeve of his jacket. "You might let me off this once anyways," he sobbed.

"But why should I?" inquired Ishmael.

"A-cause of the pretty lady a-coming."

Ishmael laughed, and for a moment entertained the thought of admitting this plea and letting the pleader go. But Ishmael was really too conscientious to suffer himself to be lured aside from the strict line of duty by any passing fancy or caprice; so he answered:

"Your plea is an ingenious one, Eddy; and since you have wit enough to make it, you must have sense enough to learn your lesson. Come, now, let us sit down and put our heads together, and try again, and see what we can do."

And with the kindness for which he was ever noted, the young master sat down beside his stupid pupil, and patiently went over and over the lesson with him, until he had succeeded in getting it into Eddy's thick head.

"There now! how you know the difference between a common noun and a proper one! are you not glad?" asked Ishmael, smiling; then closing his schoolroom, he started home.

There he delighted Hannah with the news that her former friend and patron, Mrs. Middleton, was soon expected at Rushy. And he interested both Reuben and Hannah with the description of beautiful Beatrice's visit to the school.

"I wonder why he couldn't have fallen in love with her!" thought Hannah.

CHAPTER XLIX.

STILL ONWARD.

His, all the mighty movements
That urge the hero's breast,
The longings and the longings,
The spirit's glad unrest,
That seems to exult in tender,
Or fortune's favour ask,
That never will surrender,
Whatever be the task!

M. F. Tupper.

On Thursday morning, as Ishmael was opening his schoolroom, he heard a brisk step approaching, and Mrs. Middleton was at his side. Their hands flew into each other and shook mutually before either spoke. Then, with beaming eyes and hearty tones, both exclaimed at once:

"I am so glad to see you!"

"Of course, you arrived last night! I hope you had a pleasant journey, and that Mrs. Middleton has recovered her fatigue," said Ishmael, placing a chair for his visitor.

"A very pleasant journey. The day was delightfully cool, and even my wife did not suffer from fatigue. She is quite well this morning, and quite delighted with her new home. But see here, Ishmael! how you have changed! You are taller than I am! You must be near six feet in height! Are you not?"

"I suppose so," smiled Ishmael.

"And your hair is so much darker. Altogether, you are so much improved."

"There was room for it."

"There always is, my boy. Well, I did not come here to pay compliments, my young friend. I came to tell you that, thanks to my little Beatrice's activity, we are all comfortably settled at home now; and we should be happy if you would come on Friday evening and spend with us Saturday and Sunday, your weekly holidays."

"I thank you, sir; I thank you very much. I should extremely like to come, but—"

"Now, Ishmael, hush! I do not intend to take a denial. When I give an invitation I am always very much in earnest about it; and to show you how much I am in earnest about this, I will tell you that I reflected this was Thursday, and that if I asked you to-day you could tell your friends when you got home this evening, and come to-morrow morning prepared to remain over till Monday. Otherwise, if I had not invited you until to-morrow morning, you would have had to walk all the way back home to-morrow evening to tell your friends before coming to see us. So you see how much I wished to have you come, Ishmael, and how I studied ways and means. Mrs. Middleton and all your old schoolmates are equally anxious to see you, so say no more about it, but come."

"Indeed, I earnestly thank you, Mr. Middleton, and I was only about to decline your kind invitation in toto, only to say that I am occupied with duties that I cannot neglect on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings;

but on Saturday evening I shall be very happy to come over and spend Sunday with you."

"Very well then, Ishmael, so be it; I accept so much of your pleasant company since no more of it is to be had. By the way, Ishmael?"

"Yes sir."

"That was a gallant feat and a narrow escape of yours, as it was described to me by my niece Claudia. Nothing less than the preservation of her life could have justified you in such a desperate act."

"I am grateful to Miss Merlin for remembering it, sir."

"As if she ever could forget it! Good Heaven! Well, Ishmael, I see that your pupils are assembling fast. I will not detain you from your duties longer. Good morning; and remember that we shall expect you on Saturday evening."

"Good morning, sir: I will remember; pray give my respects to Mrs. Middleton and all the family."

"Certainly," said Mr. Middleton, as he walked away.

Ishmael re-entered the schoolroom, rang the bell to call the pupils in, and commenced the duties of the day.

On Saturday afternoon, all his weekly labours being scrupulously finished, Ishmael walked over to Rushy Beacon, as Mr. Middleton's house was called.

It was a very large old edifice of white stone, and stood upon the extreme point of a headland running out into the river. There were many trees behind it, landward; but none before it, seaward; so that really the tall white house, with its many windows, might well serve as a beacon to passing vessels.

Around the headland upon which it was situated, the waters swept with a mighty impetus and deafening roar that gave the place its descriptive name. As the air and water here were mildly salt, the situation was deemed very healthy and well suited to such delicate lungs as required a stimulating atmosphere, and yet could not bear the full strength of the sea breezes. As such the place had been selected by Mr. Middleton for the residence of his invalid wife.

When Ishmael approached the house, he found the family all assembled in the long front porch to enjoy the fine water view.

Walter Middleton, who was the first to spy Ishmael's approach, ran down the steps and out to meet him, exclaiming, as he caught and shook his hand:

"How are you, old boy? how are you? looking in high health and handsomeness, at any rate! I should have come down to the school to see you, Ishmael; only, on the very morning after our arrival, I had to mount my horse and ride down to Plymouth to attend to some business for my father, and I did not get back until late last night. Come, my mother is anxious to see her old favourite."

And so, overpowering Ishmael with the cordiality of his greeting, Walter drew his friend's arm within his own, and took him up on the porch in the midst of the family group, that immediately surrounded and warmly welcomed him.

"How handsome and manly you have grown, my dear," said Mrs. Middleton, with almost motherly pride in her favourite.

Ishmael blushed and bowed in reply to this direct compliment and soon he was seated among them chatting pleasantly.

One day Mr. Middleton, who took a deep interest in the struggles of Ishmael, said to him:

"You should enter some law-school, my young friend."

"I intend to do so, sir, as soon as I have accomplished two things."

"And what are they?"

"Saved money enough to defray my expenses and found a substitute for myself as master of this little school."

"Oh, bother the school, you must not always be sacrificing yourself to the public welfare, Ishmael," laughed Mr. Middleton, who sometimes permitted himself to use rough words.

"But to duty, sir?"

"Oh, if you once make it a question of duty, I have no more to say," was the concluding remark of Ishmael's friend.

One bright hope burned constantly before Ishmael's mental vision—of seeing Claudia; but, ah! this hope was destined to be deferred from week to week, and finally disappointed.

Judge Merlin did not come to Tanglewood as usual this summer. He took his daughter to the sea-side instead, where they lived quietly at a private boarding-house, because it was not intended that Miss Merlin should enter society until the coming winter in London.

To Ishmael this was a bitter disappointment; but a bitter tonic, too, since it served to give strength to his mind.

As the month of November drew to a close, Ishmael began to compute the labours, progress, and profits of the year. He found that he had brought his school into fine working order; he had brought his pupils on well; he had made Reuben Gray a very good reader, penman, arithmetician, and book-keeper; and lastly,

he had advanced himself very far in his chosen professional studies. But he had made but little money, and saved less than a hundred pounds. This was not enough to support him, even by the severest economy, at any law-school. Something else, he felt, must be done for the next year, by which more money might be made. So after reflecting upon the subject for some time he wrote out two advertisements—one for a teacher, competent to take charge of a small country school, and the other for a situation as book-keeper, clerk, or amanuensis. In the course of a week the first advertisement was answered by a clergyman living in the same neighbourhood, who proposed to augment the small salary he received for preaching on Sundays, by teaching a day-school all the week. Ishmael had an interview with him, and finding him all that could be desired in a clergyman and country schoolmaster, willingly engaged to relinquish his own post in favour of the new candidate on the first of the coming year.

His second advertisement was not yet answered; but Ishmael kept it in and anxiously awaited the result.

At length his perseverance was crowned with a greater success than he could have anticipated. It was about the middle of December, a few days before the breaking up of his school for the Christmas holidays, that he called at the Shelton post-office to ask if there were any letters for "X. Y. Z.," those being the initials he had signed to his second advertisement. A letter was handed to him; at last, then, it had come! Without scrutinizing the handwriting of the superscription, Ishmael tore it open and read:

"December 14th.

"Mr. X.Y.Z.—I have seen your advertisement in the Times. I am in want of an intelligent and well-educated young man to act as my confidential secretary and occasional amanuensis. If you will write to me, enclosing testimonials and references as to your character and competency, and stating the amount of salary you expect to receive, I hope we may come to a satisfactory arrangement. Respectfully yours,

"RANDOLPH MERLIN."

It was from Claudia's father, then! It was a stroke of fate, or so it seemed to the surprised and excited mind of Ishmael!

Trembling with joy, he retired to the private parlour of the quiet little village inn to answer the letter, so that it might go off to London by the mail that started that afternoon. He smiled to himself as he wrote that Judge Merlin himself had had ample opportunity of personally testing the character and ability of the advertiser, but that if further testimony were needed, he begged to refer to Mr. James Middleton, of Rushy Beacon. Finally, he left the question of the amount of salary to be settled by the judge himself. He signed, sealed, and directed this letter, and hurried to the post-office to post it before the closing of the mail.

And then he went home in a maze of delight.

Three anxious days passed, and then Ishmael received his answer. It was a favourable and a conclusive one. The judge told him that from the post-office address given in the advertisement, as well as from other circumstances, he had supposed the advertiser to be Ishmael himself, but could not be sure until he had received his letter, when he was glad to find his suppositions correct, as he should much rather receive into his family, in a confidential capacity, a known young man like Mr. Worth, than any stranger, however well recommended the latter might be; he would fix the salary at three hundred pounds, with board and lodgings if that would meet the young gentleman's views; if, the terms suited, he hoped Mr. Worth would lose no time in joining him in London, as he, the writer, was overwhelmed with correspondence that was still accumulating.

Ishmael answered this second letter immediately, saying that he would be in London on the following Tuesday.

After posting this letter he walked rapidly homeward, calling at Rushy on his way to inform his friends, the Middletons, of his change of fortune. As Ishmael was not egotistical enough to speak of himself and his affairs until it became absolutely needful for him to do so, he had never told Mr. Middleton of his plan of giving up the school to the minister and seeking another situation for himself. And during the three days of his correspondence with Judge Merlin, he had not even seen Mr. Middleton, whom he only took time to visit on Saturday evenings.

Upon this afternoon, he reached Rushy just as the family were sitting down to dinner. They were as much surprised as pleased to see him at such an unusual time as the middle of the week. Mr. Middleton ordered another plate; Beatrice saw that room was made for another chair; and so Ishmael was welcomed by acclamation, and seated among them at the table.

"And now, young gentleman, tell us what it all

means. For glad as we are to see you, and glad as you are to see us, we know very well that you did not take time to come here in the middle of the week merely to please yourself or us; pleasure not being your first object in life, Ishmael!" said Mr. Middleton.

"I regret to say, sir, that I came to tell you I am going away on Monday morning," replied Ishmael, gravely, for at the moment he felt a very real regret at the very thought of leaving such good and true friends.

"Going away!" exclaimed all the family in a breath, and in consternation; for this boy, with his excellent character and charming manners, had deeply endeared himself to all his friends. "Going away!" they repeated.

"I am sorry to say it," said Ishmael.

"But this is so unexpected, so sudden!" said Mrs. Middleton.

"What is the matter? Have you enlisted for a soldier? engaged as a sailor? been seized with the gold fever?"

"Neither, sir; I will explain," said Ishmael. And forthwith he told all his plans and prospects, in the fewest possible words.

"And so you are going to London, to be Randolph Merlin's clerk! Well, Ishmael, as he is a thorough lawyer, though not very brilliant barrister, I do not know that you could be in a better school! Heaven prosper you, my lad! By the way, Ishmael, just before you came in, we were all talking of going to London ourselves."

"Indeed! and is there really a prospect of your going?" inquired Ishmael, in pleased surprise.

"Well, yes. You see the judge wishes a chaperon for his daughter this winter, and has invited Mrs. Middleton, and, in fact, all the family, to come and spend the season with them in London. He says that he has taken the old London House, which is large enough to accommodate our united families, and ten times as many."

"And you will go?" inquired Ishmael, anxiously. "Well, yes, I think so. You see, this place, so prominently healthy during eight months of the year, is rather too much exposed and too bleak in the depth of winter to suit my wife. She begins to cough already. And as Claudia really does need a matronly friend near her, and as the judge is very anxious for us to come, I think all interests will be best served by our going."

"I hope you will go very soon," said Ishmael.

"In a week or ten days," replied Mr. Middleton. Ishmael soon after arose and took his leave, for he had a long walk before him, and a momentous interview with Hannah to brave at the end of it.

After tea that evening, Ishmael broke the news to Reuben and Hannah. Both were considerably startled and bewildered, for they, no more than the Middletons, had received any previous hint of the young man's intentions. And now they really did not know whether to congratulate Ishmael on going to seek his fortune or to console with him for leaving home! Reuben heartily shook hands with Ishmael and said how sorry he should be to part with him, but how glad he was that the young man was going to do something handsome for himself.

Hannah cried heartily, but, for the life of her, could not have told whether it was for joy or sorrow. To her apprehension to go to London and be Judge Merlin's clerk seemed to be one of the greatest honours that any young man could attain; so she was perfectly delighted with that part of the affair. But, on the other hand, Ishmael had been to her like the most affectionate and dearest of sons, and to part with him seemed more than she could bear; so she wept vehemently and clung to her boy.

Reuben sought to console her.

"Never mind, Hannah, never mind. It is the law of nature that the young bird must leave his nest, and the young man his home! But never you mind. London ain't out of the world, and any time you want to see your boy very bad, I'll just put Dobbin to the chaise, and take you and the young uns up there for a day or two! Law, Hannah, you never should shed a tear if I could help it! 'Cause I feel almost guilty when you cry, Hannah, as if I ought to help it somehow!" said the good fellow.

"As if you could, Reuben! But it is I myself who do wrong to cry for anything when I am blessed with the love of such a heart as yours, Reuben. There, I will not cry any more! Of course, Ishmael must go and make his fortune, and I ought to be glad, and I am glad!"

On Friday evening Ishmael, in breaking up his school for the Christmas holidays, also took a final leave of his pupils. The young master had so endeared himself to his rough pupils that they grieved sincerely at the separation. The boys wept, and even our stupid little friend, Eddy, who could not learn grammar, had learned to love his kind young teacher, and at the prospect of parting with him and having the minister for a master roared aloud, saying:

"Master Worth have allers been good to us, so he have; but the minister—he'll lick us, ever so much!"

Ishmael distributed such parting gifts as his slender purse would afford, and so dismissed his pupils.

On Sunday evening he took leave of his friends the Middletons, who promised to join him in London in the course of a week.

And on Monday morning he took leave of Hannah and Reuben.

(To be continued.)

MEET MR. GENTLE MARY

Meet me, gentle, bright-eyed Mary,
When the sunlight leaves the glade
Where from early morn his glory
Gladdened all the greenwood shade;
And wifle every woodland warbler,
In a long and joyous lay,
Murmurs forth its adoration
To the fading god of day.

Meet me, gentle, bright-eyed Mary,
Where the brooklet babbles by,
With a soft and sparkling brightness,
'Neath the oak-tree standing high;
And while shadows round us gather,
I will draw thee to my heart,
And declare the love I bore thee,
While we wandered far apart.

Meet me, gentle, bright-eyed Mary,
And repose upon the breast
That has loved thee in its trouble,
And now claims thee in its rest;
And through life, my gentle Mary,
Though my cares should come again,
I will bear them, for thy presence,
Will remove their sharpest pain.

M. J. M.

ALLEGRA PHILLIPS.

"UGH! It's like escaping from a subterranean dungeon, where noisome reptiles cling to each mouldering stair, and the miasma of death pervades the atmosphere, to emerge from that chamber with its loathsome presence into the healthful warmth and glorious beauty of this June morning. I don't like to hate anything—much less a breathing creature, wearing the image of my Maker. It casts a shadow over the sunlight, dims the very stars of heaven, and drapes earth in the habiliments of the grave. But I can't help it! Every time that man lifts those flickering, pale eyes to mine, as though on my word hung the issues of his fate, I shrink from him with an abhorrence that struggles madly for expression; and the touch of his clammy hand, as I study his pulse, is to me as the slime of a serpent. I look into my breast, and through past experiences, in vain, to find a solution or parallel. Never before have I had a patient whose life was not so interwoven with mine that neither pleasure, rest nor slumber could enchain me in the hour of peril. And here I am, flying from his bed, which ere to-morrow's sun may be transformed into the couch of death; dumbly praying that in the whirl of events some object may shut his face for ever from my horizon."

Dr. Bronson had rushed out of a private boarding-house—walking swiftly along during the fevered course of this mental soliloquy.

The gloom was still heavy on his brow, and the bitter spirit clutching fiercely at his heart, when his hand was grasped warmly, and a bright, manly countenance interposed between him and the long, shaded avenue down which he was gazing into vacancy.

"Luskily met, my dear Esculapius. I was on my way to you, with a message from my sisters, who are overwhelmed with the entertainment of a party of friends, to invite you, with orders to compel you in case of resistance."

"Thanks, friend Schofield. It is impossible. Make my excuses and compliments to the ladies. I have an extreme case on my hands. A crisis will take place between this and morning. I may have work to do."

"Confound it! That's just what I told Helen. I'm glad I didn't have a leaning towards a profession. Who, in the name of common-sense, can have the stupidity to be sick this weather?"

"A stranger in the city, by the name of Stockbridge. He was thrown from a carriage a few weeks since, and broke his arm. It's been a difficult case to manage, owing to his plethoric habit of body and the restlessness of his mind. This morning, I discovered a serious inflammation. I ordered an application, and must watch the result. I did not intimate to him that there was a possibility of his being obliged to choose between his arm and life. His nervousness would have completely baffled all my expedients. You perceive that my duty is plain."

"Why, yes, but not the necessity of such a sacrifice of oneself. I'll own, it's as great an enigma to me as to the rest of our set, why a young man, handsome and social, with a large prospective fortune, should make

himself as really a slave to his profession as though he depended on it for his daily bread."

"Oh, as for that," replied Dr. Bronson, "there's not so much difference between our courses after all, my boy. We'll compare notes some day. But now I must away."

The doctor resumed his hurried pace, but it is no longer the flight of aversion and terror, but an inspiration. Golden summer, with its skies of blue, its wealth of shadowy foliage, its trailing vines, flecked with blossoms, stretch their arms over him in a loving benediction. Hastily turning a corner, he threads his way amidst a labyrinth of houses, past workshop and forge. He has left the cool shadows and perfumes of flowers far behind; but sunshine is around him and in his heart. Reaching a tall brick house, he crosses the threshold of the common entrance. Up, flight after flight of weary stairs, lightly as if treading in the footprints of angels, he pauses on a narrow landing. A single ray of sunlight, refracted from the sky-window, transfigures the floating particles of dust into revolving sparks of fire. His eyes are fixed eagerly on the door. A light footfall within thrills his veins. There is a creaking of the hinges, and a plain little woman in a widow's garb stands before him. A cloud drops over his brow, shutting out some gleams of brightness; but he addresses her courteously, adding, in a tone of well-concealed anxiety:

"Miss Phillips?"

Mrs. Wells swings open the door softly, disclosing a suit of rooms in the style of model-furnished lodgings, and a lady sitting near a well-lighted window, bending over a table strewn with books and writing materials.

It is a rare opportunity to watch Allegra Phillips a few moments unobserved. A month ago it was his daily feast. He attended her through a protracted and nearly fatal fever. Through some mysterious process only known to lovers, he came to regard that marble face, with its drooping eyelids and dusky lashes, nestling amidst snowy draperies, as the dearest and sweetest thing on earth. But how incomparably more beautiful does she seem to him now, sitting there with perfectly restored health, in a halo of the morning sunbeams! The startling whiteness of her complexion has assumed a warm olive tinge, and the bright red comes and goes on her cheek with every shifting emotion. A clear, still splendour reveals itself in the shadowy eyes as, dropping her pen, she puts back the clustering masses of raven hair and gazes absently past the window. It tells the observant witness that she is not the care-free merry girl that her years might indicate, but a being of mature purposes, who has looked deeply into life, and is not afraid to meet it; and yet every ripple of her sweet mouth impresses him with a pure and perfect womanliness.

"Why, Doctor Bronson, how you frightened me," she exclaimed, becoming conscious of his presence. "I had forgotten you were in the world. But I'm so glad to see you!"

The deathlike paleness which overspread her countenance at the first glimpse of the silent figure standing at her door, was instantaneously succeeded by a richer wave of colour that swept up to the heights of her pure brow. Rising from her seat, she came forward, extending her hand with charming frankness.

"So you never expected to see me here again, after the necessity of my presence ceased? Your late urgent demand for my bill of attendance would have been received by some as an edict of banishment. You did not mean that, I trust? Ah, Miss Phillips, if you knew how much it hurt me."

The soft hand was gently detained, and an earnest glance sought in the mirror-like depths of those uplifted eyes vainly for some faint reflection of a soul weighed down by the burden of an unconfessed love. Relinquishing the tender grasp, he threw himself moodily into his favourite seat, in the recess of the shaded window. A strong doubt and timidity had suddenly seized him.

The remark and action was evidently understood by the lady to mean nothing more than a friendly reproach, for her haste in repaying a debt that might have been considered burdensome to one in her condition. Turning on him a full, eloquent look, she replied:

"Could you but know, how rich and happy it made me to be able so soon to cancel that obligation, the act would have gladdened rather than grieved your generous heart. Still, I am your debtor, and so must remain, always. I owe you my life, for you saved it. If I have uttered no word of gratitude during the pleasant days of my convalescence, it was because my heart was too full for utterance. You came here at the bidding of a stranger. You found me alone, in suffering, and destitute of means. You provided me with a nurse, the most faithful that ever blessed an invalid—supplied all my wants—raised me to health, and so to competence. What is money? I can earn that when I can think. But who, at will, can find a friend? or in what words shall his value be fully estimated?"

"Miss Phillips, I beg of you to spare me. I have listened to you because your goodness emboldens the subject and makes it your own. But justice prompts

me to the humbling confession, that the simple services rendered you were chiefly the emanations of an unadulterated selfishness."

Listening to his words, her hand carelessly rested on a book, she opened it and then tossed it aside with an expression of pain, saying:

"I never touch that volume without shivering at the remembrance of that horrible conceit that led me down to that trance-like illness. I was engaged in translating some portions of it, when that fearful dizziness and thirst seized me. Instantly the pages began to run together and consolidate into an image I shudder to recall, and one which continued to haunt me, glaring out from behind each sliding avalanche, toppling mountain, falling building, under which I escaped crushing, the last moment, by the interposition of an unseen arm. Oh, how welcome then was the face of either yourself or Mrs. Wells, to assure me that I was here, and among friends!"

"How you must have suffered!"

"Very little, doctor. Presently, everything gigantic and terrible melted into a soft, delicious landscape, and I seemed borne along with shut eyes over a glassy lake, beneath a tropical sky. With the exception of the first few days, my illness was a sweet restless dream, and I would not have missed it."

"Nor I, for the whole world." And Ralph Bronson rose from his seat with shining eyes and stood proudly at her side. Looking down into the suddenly clouded face with an expression of indescribable tenderness, he continued: "Do you not know, loveliest and dearest, that you are never again to walk down another of life's declivities alone? Has not your heart already told you that there is no more work for these weary fingers—no more forced thinking for this precious head?—and drawing it gently to his breast, he touched his lips reverently to the ebony locks encircling the white brow. "Do not go. Hear me through. I love you! And this simplest and sweetest form of the heart's confession, is but mockery of what I feel. Next to the bliss of heaven, will be the joy of calling you my wife."

Allegra Phillips rose up pale as a snow-wreath, with her glorious orbs filled with that solemn light which had so often thrilled her waiting lover, and laid one hand in significant warning on the arm that would have folded her to a wildly-beating breast.

"Dr. Bronson, forgive me! I ought not to have heard this. I tried to fly, but I had no power to interrupt you in a rehearsal, so sweet to other women's hearts, so agonizing to mine! Doubt me not, when I tell you I would die this instant, if I could yield my breath guiltlessly, to spare your noble heart the pain I must inflict. Why did I not think of this before?"

Blankness settled down on the manly brow, and the words came forth, forced, unnatural:

"You are, then, engaged—you already love?"

"I have sometimes feared it—Heaven be merciful!" she said it musingly, sadly; then starting and colouring, she added: "No, doctor, my heart is free."

"And you cannot love me? Pardon the presumption of my words, but in those best hours of watching by your pillow, when, at every sinking of your pulse, I felt the ruddy drops stealing out of my sad heart, you gave me such looks of tenderness, as a true woman bestows only on him she loves."

"Dear Heaven! Have I been thus weak and sinful? Then ought I of truth to go down on my knees to the best and most honourable of men. Hear me, only friend of my friendless life. Condemn, or pity, as I deserve. You have been talking—and I madly listening—about a passion, a joy, as far out of my reach as heaven is lifted from the view of the lost. I have thought with such tears, as I must not weep now, of what it would be to enshrine the image of an equal soul in the heart's sacred recesses, and gaze on it to the exclusion of all others, till the silent worshipper grew into the likeness and spirit of the beloved. I have looked down from my solitary window, on a pair of simple lovers, that steal out at twilight to whisper their vows, under yon tree, and fled to my room's remotest corner, lest I should be too severely tempted, and so break one of God's holy commandments. I tell you all this, Dr. Bronson, for I am not prudish, though I will be just, that you may know and understand something of what I feel, when I say unto you, in reply to your manly pleading, that I cannot—dare not love!"

"Allegra Phillips, what madness is this? I have such faith in you, notwithstanding the mystery that envelops you, and in the goodness of God, who I believe has created us for each other, that I could challenge the world to show just cause why we should not be one."

"Ah! you will not understand. I must speak out—the bitter, scathing truth. Oh, why did you not let me die? Then had I been at rest; and you, my friend, in peace. *I am already a wife!* Even now, the man that owns me may be stealing up those stairs to reclaim his fugitive. I thought it was he to-day, when I caught the first glimpse of your figure at my door."

"Great God! Can this be true?"

Ralph Bronson drew back from the chair, on which he had been partially leaning, and sat down in the recessed window.

The blighting intelligence had been none too reluctantly or cautiously broken. His dream celestial lay prostrate in the dust, shivered by a lightning stroke.

The rain of tears, and a succession of stifled sobs, recalled him at length from the selfish indulgence of his disappointment. Rising, he returned to her side, and gazed mournfully on the bowed head.

"Dear lady, weep not for me, I shall find strength to overcome this unfortunate passion. I will leave you now, to return again your friend. We will not lose each other wholly. And it shall be my care that friendship do not pain or sully you. In the meantime give me some commission of kindness. The smallest opportunity to serve you, will be balm to my wounded breast."

"Now Heaven shower best blessings on you, brave soul! There is nothing you can do so worthy of yourself, so blest for me, as to forget that you ever knew Allegra Phillips. It tortures me to let you go thus, knowing well that when your love is dead, you will first distrust, then condemn, and last despise me. I cannot speak of the great agony of my life, even for the blessed chance of exonerating myself in your eyes from blame. And so farewell."

"You will let me come back by-and-bye—your friend?"

"I must not."

The look of unfeigned distress moved him more forcibly than her fainting tones, to cut short the painful parting. An irresistible influence urged him to one more request.

"Stay, yet another moment. Who knows, but it may be in my power, far from you, and unknown, to render you some service? Do you wear your husband's name?"

"No; that only by which I was baptized in infancy. His name is Stockbridge. And now, good friend, adieu!"

With these words, Allegra's sadly-beautiful face vanished behind the closing door of her chamber, towards which she had been slowly retreating, in her wish to be alone in her grief.

Dr. Bronson stood still a few minutes in breathless amazement. Then he strode down the stairs, traversed the half-dozen streets he had trodden so hopefully but an hour since, turning neither to the right nor left, till he gained the boarding-house of his patient. Schooling his face to severest calmness, while his eyes blazed with unnatural excitement, he waited an answer to his impetuous ring.

"Go to No. 7 and bring me a report of Mr. Stockbridge," he said to the domestic.

He had appointed his second call at one o'clock, but the stunning suspicion that his patient was the husband of the woman he had so sincerely loved, impelled his footsteps thither beyond his power of resistance.

"Mr. Stockbridge says he is easier—the pain is nearly gone from his arm."

"What!—so soon!" and he hurried up the stairs with a stern face and palpitating heart.

He found his patient in a dozing state. Removing the bandage with womanly gentleness, he examined the wound critically. The crisis had taken place sooner than he expected. His worst fears were realised. The arm must be removed or the man would die. While holding the fingers on the faintly-pulsating wrist, he took in, at one devouring glance, each separate feature with the whole contour of the reposeful face. A fall of straight, black hair hung over low, receding temples, and under a pair of contracted brows gleamed those small, colourless, and wavering eyes. The rest of his countenance was heavy and inclined to coarseness, though when enlivened by a smile it was rather pleasing than repulsive. In the making up of his face there seemed to be a struggle between effeminacy and the ferocity of the savage. Over the entire man was flung an air of such brutishness and lack of the characteristics of soul, that the questioning gazer felt it an impossibility to associate him in any relation with the elegant, refined, and fascinating Allegra Phillips.

"Doctor, you don't find anything wrong?"

"Yes, sir."

"There's no danger, though?"

"There is danger."

"But I shan't die, doctor?"

"Unless some change is effected, your days on earth are numbered."

The cowardly terror that for the last moment had been blanching the sick man's face to the greyness of ashes, and convulsing his features till he presented a frightful picture of remorse, tempted the doctor to a somewhat ambiguous reply. Had there remained a hope of arresting the inflammation, he would have felt himself sacredly bound to guard his patient from excitement; but now that his mind must be prepared for the amputation, he was not unwilling that his life should pass in such startling review before his gaze, that heart and lips would unclose in confirmation or denial of the overwhelming conviction which, in spite

of all apparent contradiction, was momentarily gaining ground in his breast.

"God of Heaven! O doctor! help me—I cannot die! How long shall I live?"

The terrified wretch was gasping for breath, and his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth.

"You will have quite time enough to make your will. You had better not yield to unnecessary alarm. If it is within the limit of medical skill to save you, it shall be done."

Seizing the first words, and unheedingly flinging away the assurance contained in the last, he broke forth in a vehemence that appeared foreign to his character.

"I don't want to make a will. She'll get everything when I'm dead. O Heaven! save me. But I want to make a confession. What if I should plunge into the bottomless pit, instead of sweeping to my revenge? Doctor, sit down here. You must hear it—there's nobody else. Perhaps you'll find her; or, if not, have my statement published when it's all over. Justice must be done that woman, or I shall be lost to all eternity. I feel it here."

Dr. Bronson felt himself a powerless, spell-bound witness of some thrilling drama. It might end tragically. He feared it, yet found no word to stay the disclosure or catastrophe.

"Four years ago I was happy man, ploughing my fields and harvesting my grain, ignorant of the raging elements within that have consumed me. An old gentleman came from the city—not this city—the scene of my story is many miles away—to our country neighbourhood for his health. He lodged with us. My mother and I lived alone on the farm. At the close of the summer he was taken sick and sent for his daughter. She was still a school-girl, less than seventeen, but I fell distractedly in love with her. I could think of nothing else but her handsome face and form, and yet she hardly seemed to know I was in existence. Her father respected and trusted me. His illness proved fatal. In his last moments he entreated her to accept me as a husband. He could not die in peace and leave her unprotected. She held out steadily and bravely against it. I think she hated me from the first. The glazing eye and farewell kiss conquered her. Throwing her arms passionately about his neck, she promised to be my wife—anybody's wife, if he would speak to her but once again. He opened his lips to bless her and commend her to God, then died."

In a month we were married. I verily believe she would rather have gone to her grave, but her father was her deity and the disposer of her fate. Now, thought I, she is mine; but I had reckoned without my host. She was polite, kind, and submissive to me and to my mother; but never a look of fondness, or a word or act indicating that she belonged to us, or felt the slightest sympathy in our homely plans or pursuits. Her case of books—all she possessed in the world save her clothing—was her kindred, friends, and company—almost her meat and drink; for she lived like nobody else. I bore it as well as I could, though I fancied she despised my ignorance and uncultivated ways. It was something to be proud of in that out-of-the-way country place to have such a beautiful and learned wife. Why, our minister said she could talk in five or six languages. Finally, a little baby came to us, and I found out that she had a heart, and I grew as jealous and wicked as Satan because I had never got at it. No woman ever loved a child as that girl, almost as childlike as he, loved that innocent babe. Studies, flowers, walks—everything made room for him. She grew so happy that she could afford now and then to give me a smile, and her lullabies filled the old house with song. She would have melted then into a kind of patient endurance for me, which would pass with some for wifely love; but I would not let her. I began to hate her, and look with jealous rage on the innocent lamb because he had won what I could not. At length he fell sick. She watched over him till her rosy face was white as a sheet, her wonderful eyes growing brighter and brighter all the while.

"One night, after he had begun to mend, my mother insisted on sitting up to watch him while my wife slept. She objected. For the first time I interposed a husband's authority, announcing my intention of taking charge of him myself. She yielded without a word. Oh, when I think now of the look of trust with which she gave the darling of her bosom to my arms, I could almost tear my heart out! He never took to me; his mother was his all. Following her with his eyes till she was out of sight, he hushed the sobs of his little heart and turned away from me, his father. I think the devil took full possession of me from that time. I tossed him into his cradle—he did not dare to cry with my fierce look on him—and sat down, administering the medicine at stated intervals. He did not sleep much, but kept his large, bright eyes—a perfect copy of hers—fastened on me. In that steady gaze I seemed to read everything to madden me—all her pride and reserve, her superiority and distaste for my humble sphere, her refinement and

purity that no contact with our coarse life could lower or stain.

"Towards morning he grew worse, and I called his mother. Ten minutes after she clasped him to her bosom he was dead—her sweet birdling, her dove of promise, her life of life. I am repeating her very words. I had made a mistake in the medicines, and he was poisoned. It was a mistake, but exasperated by her looks of dumb reproach, her wailings of despair, I told her I did it purposely to be revenged on her for loving him and not me. She gave me one long, piercing glance, as though she would wring from my black soul some acknowledgment or extenuation of the crime, but said nothing.

"The night after the burial I came home to my tomb-like house to find it deserted, and my wife fled. I have pursued her as her shadow from that hour till the day I claimed your services for my shattered arm. For two years I have lived on her tortures and terrors, and have been famished and wretched only when I have discovered her bloom unfading, her courage undaunted, and her retreat impregnable."

He stopped, breathless and exhausted. His listener still preserved the iron silence in which he fixed his features at the opening of the rapid recital.

"Doctor Bronson, speak and tell me honestly, as though you were on a jury trying a man for his life, can there be mercy for such as I?"

"Not here, sir, but in heaven, where souls are purified from the dross of earth."

"And there is no chance of my life. Oh, mercy! mercy!"

"I did not say that, sir. I have an engagement out of town at two o'clock. I shall not be absent above an hour. On my return I shall be prepared to decide fully on the best course to pursue in your case."

"Come back soon—I cannot stay alone. Oh, if I could only throw myself at the feet of that saintly wife. She would have forgiven me once—before little Roby was killed. Oh, Allegra, Allegra! you are richly avenged!"

The dear name, that he could never think of without a heart-thrill, was clinging to the villain's lips as Dr. Bronson dashed out of the room. It seemed a profanation of everything pure and holy.

He shut the door and fled down the stairs. Was there no spot in the whole universe where he could hide himself guiltlessly for the next twelve hours? After that, there was not skill enough in the medical world to deliver this wretch from corruption and the worm. He was a blot in the sunlight of creation. Would not that man be counted accursed who should subvert the merciful designs of Omnipotence by bringing this vaulted child-slayer back to the shores of life, and setting him once more like a bloodhound on his prey?

Amidst a whirl of such thoughts as these, and with the temptation of that vision of bliss for ever hanging before his gaze, Dr. Bronson stepped into his carriage, brought round by his orders at this hour, and drove furiously out of the city.

Down by the river-bank, under the willows, within the murmur of leaf and waterfall, calmer thoughts and nobler aspirations came back to the weak human heart. The hour spent there and by the couch of a cherub child just pluming its wings for a heavenward flight, was a communion with his better self, in the presence of ministering angels, who hastened to clothe the victor over temptation with the divinest of resolves.

He returned to the busy hum of the metropolis strong to act his part, and mighty to endure such ills as God alone had the right to remove from his path. At three o'clock he entered the sick chamber with a brother physician, amputated the arm, and so saved the life of the man who stood between him and happiness.

Days and weeks wore on heavily and monotonously enough to Dr. Bronson. At the end of a month his patient, having recovered his health, departed for his home in the country, a wiser, if not truly repentant man. On the following morning, while making his round of visits, grown utterly distasteful, he encountered his friend Schofield. He had not seen him since that eventful day which had changed the peaceful flow of his well-regulated life into a torrent of quenchless yearnings and unceasing struggles. The countenance of the pleasure-seeker was lit up by a mischievous smile, and his silver-toned voice had caught a triumphant tone.

"Ha! I was just thinking of you, old fellow. Had the morning news?"

"Got it in my pocket—haven't found a moment of leisure yet. Anything remarkable?"

"Why, no—a little startling, perhaps; but first I want to fasten you to a conclusion towards which I have vainly striven to drive you at almost every collision since our college days."

"What is that, pray? I wasn't aware of any extraordinary efforts in my favour!" laughing quietly.

"Summed up in an axiom, it amounts to this: 'Live for yourself, and let others take care of themselves.' Confess, now, that there was a vein of boasting, in spite of its extreme modesty, in your proposal to com-

pare notes. Suppose we review what we have separately achieved for ourselves and others the last month, and see which has the best of it. You remember how hard I tried to carry you off. You chose to deny yourself for the nobler purpose of saving a man's life. I followed the bent of my inclination without much regard to humanity, and have come home invigorated in health, running over with memories of the sublime and beautiful, besides—no secrets from you, old boy—in the flattering enjoyment of the love of a charming woman whom I met and won. Now read that item, and never tell me again that the plodding path of duty pays better than the shining track of pleasure."

"Railroad accident. The upward train on the — line was thrown off the track yesterday noon by a log of wood placed across it by some rascal unknown. Several of the passengers were seriously injured, and one life was lost—a man by the name of Stockbridge was killed instantly on his way home. He had but barely escaped with his life through the scientific treatment and superior skill of the well-known Dr. Bronson."

The thoughtless levity brimming over the eyes of Schofield was stilled instantly, and flung back on a heart, not bad or unfeeling, only a little intoxicated with the cup of life, as he gazed on the clenched hands buried in the paper's folds—the solemn hush that overshadowed the face of his noble friend, till every vestige of bloom faded from cheek and lip, and he stood before him a breathing image of death.

"Heavens! What have I done? Pardon me, Bronson, I could not have imagined such an interest in a mere patient—a stranger, two months ago. Believe me, this shall be my last jest on serious topics. I acknowledge the superiority of your life, your aims, your heart. I have frittered away my energies, blunted my feelings, and wasted my youth. But, good friend, I am coming back to myself, I have got somebody to live for—to help me to grow better. We shall know each other again as in the days of our boyhood. I always prized you, Ralph."

"Schofield, my friend, excuse me—I am—I think—a little ill."

The words of apology were uttered faintly; they did not reach the ear to which they were addressed. With a hurried adieu, and eyes strangely moist, Schofield was turning the next corner.

Twilight was enfolding the city in its web of silvery mist as Dr. Bronson entered the humble abode of Mrs. Wells. He was welcomed with the profound joy that always awaited him in the dwellings of the intelligent poor. After the customary preliminaries of conversation, he said, with a rising colour:

"I have called, Mrs. Wells, to ask you to go to Miss Phillips with a message. You will please not mention my name. Under the peculiar circumstances it might seem improper."

"Miss Phillips! Why, Dr. Bronson—excuse me for interrupting you, but is it possible that you did not know of her departure?"

"Madam! please explain, I know nothing of it." He was stern enough now. The possibility of her brutal husband having discovered her retreat before his departure, goaded him nearly to frenzy.

"She went a fortnight ago with Mrs. Elden and her daughters to Italy in the capacity of a companion," said Mrs. Wells.

Late in autumn, when the chilling breezes had sent the last of the butterflies of pleasure fluttering homeward, the world of fashion was struck dumb by the announcement that Dr. Ralph Bronson had returned from a five months' tour, accompanied by his bride, a foreign lady of wondrous beauty, marvellous accomplishments, and a mine of wealth.

The doors of the grand old house were flung open for a party. The newly-decorated rooms are a-b blaze with beauty and splendour. Passing, with unheeding eyes, through the billowy waves of shining apparel—past the flashing glances of the proud and loving—down this vista of life-like pictures, glaring statuary, and festoons of flowers, we glide into this silken recess, and lose ourselves in the joyous buzz, the summery chime, the rich music-swells. Two of the promenaders have paused just the other side of the friendly drapery. They are conversing in low tones. Nothing can save us from the guilt of being listeners. Worse and worse! they are old friends of ours—Mr. Schofield and his sister.

"Well, brother, what think you of the bride? You have been worshipping at her shrine the last half-hour."

"Helen, she is truly the most captivating woman I ever met. Ten minutes more would have plunged me heart-deep in love with her, but for one trifling barrier."

"I don't perceive anything so very wonderful about her. Madge Winslow is quite as beautiful, though her air of course, is less distinguished."

"You speak of face-beauty, sister. That kind will fade in the sun. I found out her style of beauty, and was getting just a little satiated with it, before I discovered that she loved my money first—after that, me."

"You were too hard with her, Eugene. She is like

the most of us women. You expected too much. Please to make up with her for my sake."

"Never! After what I've seen to-night, I'll wait for ever before I'll marry a woman in love with my bank-stock."

"Seen a vision?" laughing with a slight sneer.

Helen had long been elected by flattering friends as the prospective wife of Dr. Ralph Bronson. Possibly, the bridal *fête* did not just suit her.

"Yes, I have seen a vision, and a most rare one, too—the vision of a wife so much in love with her husband, that she is deaf, dumb, and blind to the attractions of every other man—that's the trifling barrier to which I alluded that kept me from making a fool of myself—and what is rarer still, a woman with a soul-beauty that kindles each glance into a window for the seraphs to look through, and weaves the unstudied language of her lips into a poem."

"Shall we go? The Winslows are leaving."

"Let them leave. I want to tell you how I found out the bride's name, that did not appear on the cards, and over which you ladies were half-dying with curiosity. Coming upon the happy pair, unexpectedly, I heard him whisper, 'My Allegra!' Wasn't that awkward in a husband of three months? Now, I rather liked it. And it was worth something to see that proud head, which never stooped to flattery, bent in lowliest homage, and those calm eyes beaming with a newly-risen splendour, discoursing the poetry of the heart. Noble friend Bronson! he has distanced me in the race; but mark me, Helen, the track is left behind. I won't envy him his happiness—he deserves it. E. D."

A SHARP HEARING.

THE work, carried on by forced labour, advanced slowly, and the peasants who served as masons did not exert themselves in the construction of a place which was to check the guerillas. The general had to go to Brihuega on public business and for his inspection general, and he left the command at Aunon in the hands of his brother Louis. One morning, at break of day, while at Brihuega, he was writing in his cabinet, when he thought he heard a sharp fire of musketry. He went out and asked the sentinels near his quarters if they had heard anything; all replied that they had not. Thinking he must have been deceived, he re-entered his office and continued his writing. Almost immediately the noise recommenced, and was both sharper and more distinct. It appeared to come from Aunon. The general returned, and said to the sentinels that this time they must have heard the noise; but still he only obtained the same negative reply. Major Shelley, of the Royal Irish, and some officers of his regiment who were sent for, also declared that they had heard nothing. An aide-de-camp was sent to the plateau to question the guard of the fortress; but the sounds had not been heard by anybody. Notwithstanding this, the general, uneasy about his brother, ordered the troops to horse, and went off at a gallop. By the time they had got half-way, a heavy cannonade was heard, proving that the general's sharp ears had not deceived him.

From Brihuega to Aunon, there are but six and a half leagues as the crow flies, but the distance is quadrupled by the windings of the road, the hills, and the difficulties of the paths. When the general arrived, the unfinished redoubt of the bridge, attacked by the combined forces of General Villacampa and the Empecinado, had already been carried, the intrenchments of Aunon had been forced, the streets of the village and the fields around were covered with dead, Colonel Louis Hugo was wounded, and the rest of the little garrison on the point of being annihilated. The arrival of the light horse changed the aspect of affairs, the village was preserved, the bridge retaken, and the enemy repulsed and pursued. While trying to explain to himself in what way it could have happened that he alone had heard at Brihuega the sound of the musketry at Aunon, the general thought that it might have arisen from the shape of the mountain dividing the currents of wind, or of an echo reverberating precisely to the point at which his tent happened to be placed. It added to the oddness of the affair, that General Blondeau, who was nearer Aunon than he was, had heard nothing. Whatever the explanation may be, it was, at any rate, a very singular coincidence that the echo should have warned no one but him of the danger of his brother.—*Life of Victor Hugo.*

LOVE.—Love,—does it yet walk the world, or is it imprisoned in poems and romances? Has not the circulating library become the sole home of the passion? Is love not become the exclusive property of novelists and playwrights, to be used by them only for professional purposes? Surely, if the men I see are lovers, or ever have been lovers, they would be nobler than they are. The knowledge that he is beloved should—*must* make a man tender, gentle, upright, pure. While yet a youngster in a jacket, I can remember falling desperately in love with a young lady several years my senior,—after the fashion of youngsters in jackets. Could I have fibbed in these days? Could I

have betrayed a comrade? Could I have stolen eggs or callow young from the nest? Could I have stood quietly by and seen the weak or the maimed bullied? Nay, verily! In these absurd days she lighted up the whole world for me. To sit in the same room with her was like the happiness of perpetual holiday; when she asked me to run a message for her, or to do any, the slightest service for her, I felt as if a patent of nobility were conferred on me. I kept my passion to myself, like a cake, and nibbled it in private. Juliet was several years my senior, and had a lover—was, in point of fact, actually engaged; and, in looking back, I can remember I was too much in love to feel the slightest twinge of jealousy.—*Dreamthorp. By Alexander Smith.*

THE MYSTERIOUS DREAM.

I COMMENCED my practice in the year 1836, in Bristol. Accident, or what I took to be accident, threw me into the company of a widow and her daughter, with whom I boarded. They lived in a retired way, and I was their only boarder; hence it followed naturally that I became acquainted with their history and their ways. Poverty is the most social thing, after all; it is wealth that creates a distance, maintains artificial reserve, suspicion, and silence. I had nothing but my head and hands, perhaps the best capital for the future, but the poorest for immediate use; and so, being one in position, we three became one in sentiment.

While waiting for dinner, one day, I heard voices in the room next where I was, and one was a man's voice—an unusual thing to hear there. I took note of it at once, for I must necessarily hear unless I left the room, and besides, the tones had a singular rasping harshness that caught my attention.

"Think twice before you reject my offer," said the voice; "it is the last time I shall make it. I have patiently borne your scorn and abuse which you have heaped upon me because I am my own father's son, but there must be an end to this. For the last time, I repeat my proposal. Consider what chance you have of getting by force what you refuse when freely offered you."

"There is no need of thinking even once, before I tell you that I would not accept a kingdom on your terms. You know perfectly well that this is ours in justice, and would be ours now by your father's own words if you had not taken the base advantage that circumstances placed in your power."

I recognized the voice of the last speaker. It was that of my landlady's daughter, and I waited eagerly for the next words.

"You will be hasty? Consult your interest rather than your pride, and think again. Do you not see that the game is in my hands? You cannot take it from me now, but I promise to give it you if you only say the word."

"And that word is, No! Now leave me, or I shall leave you."

He did not answer, and I heard him close the door and go heavily down the steps, and at that moment I was called to dinner.

"He has been here again, has he?" asked Mrs. Morris, at the table.

"Yes, mother."

"It is Henry Vinton, our worst enemy, and our only one, I hope," said Mrs. Morris, turning to me. Then, noticing my look of inquiry, she added: "He is heir to an estate which should fall to me. We as good as know that the will was made out for me; at least, Mr. Vinton promised it more than once, but Henry came back just in time to be with him the last week, and by wheedling him and keeping all other persons away he got a new will made which gives everything to him. And now he is scoundrel enough to come and offer it to Ellen if she will take him with it. He has not wronged us sufficiently to make him willing to let us alone, it seems; but I think it is better to be poor than to buy money on such terms as his."

"A thousand times better!" I exclaimed, with warmth.

Mrs. Morris looked as though she did not fully assent, but said:

"We are going to contest the will, however. But I don't know what we shall be able to do, for we have not the means to pay counsel."

What could I do but protest that my poor abilities were entirely at their service?—An eloquent smile and look rewarded me.

"I am afraid my head will be as useful as an older one," I said, "for I can't see that you have much chance, though a good deal of hope, if you please. The exercising of undue influence over a person making a will is an extremely hard point to establish; much harder than to prove a forgery. What Mr. Vinton's previous intentions or promises may have been is nothing to the case, but you will have to come directly down to the time when the document was executed, and to lay your finger on the compulsory influence and bring it plainly into the light,—more plainly, I fear, than you will be able to. Are you quite sure that you

have gone back far enough,—that there is no flaw in the title beyond this Henry Vinton?"

"I have thought of that," answered Mrs. Morris, "but there's no hope of doing anything so, the title is too plain. This is the way it came about. Emanuel Barsac, my father, was partly a Jew, as you have heard me say. I offended him by marrying a man who hadn't money, and he never would see me or acknowledge me afterwards. My mother was dead at that time, and he married again soon after, but I never saw this second wife, and she died before him; but he bequeathed all his property to his step-daughter Jane, on condition that she was legally married to Henry Vinton, father to this Henry, within six months after my father's death. They must be married by the Jewish ceremony, and in the very room where he died. If not married within the time set, and just in that way, or if either of them died without leaving children, then the whole was to go to two or three charitable institutions here in the city. She was in Martinique when he died, but she came home in a couple of months and was married to Henry Vinton in that very room, standing in front of the same bed where my father lay when he wrote those words. I went there myself and saw it, to make sure. They had one child—this wretched Henry Vinton. Perhaps we can do something towards breaking his title, but I have never thought of trying to break his father's."

"At what time was this child born?"

"About six weeks after their marriage."

"And you are perfectly sure that you saw your step-sister, Jane, married to Henry Vinton the elder?"

"Perfectly sure, if I can trust my own eyes."

"You knew her well, I suppose, of course?"

"Yes, though not intimately. I knew her face, though, so that it is impossible I could have mistaken it."

"How long afterwards did she live?"

"Well, some eight years. This was about thirty years ago, and I never saw them a second time till she died."

The prospect was not flattering. However, I entered on the matter with all my enthusiasm. Mrs. Morris was not just the person to awaken any very ardent interest, for she was perhaps a little too cool and self-reliant,—women should be confusing and ivy-like, then they have us in the tenderest way—yet she was an excellent type of woman, after all. But her daughter Ellen, without being particularly beautiful or striking, had just enough of the opposite qualities to the mother to attract me completely to her interests.

I did not tell Mrs. Morris and Ellen the full belief I had that it would be hopeless to take the course they proposed, but I had another plan, in pursuance of which I called upon Vinton himself.

"The perversity of women is remarkable," he said, when he ascertained on whose behalf I had waited on him. In fact, I think if it were not for their perversity, there would be no suits at law at all, and hence no lawyers. You are a young man, I see. An old one would not be in the affair at all."

"A man is always young before he is old, and as for the case in hand, we will see it out before deciding it," I replied.

"I see, I see," he said, with a slight appearance of a sneer; "you are young, and enthusiastic, and sanguine,—and Miss Ellen Morris is very interesting, is she not?"

I bit my lips with energy. Mr. Vinton resumed the conversation.

"So Mrs. Morris and Ellen are going to spend what little they have got in trying to get what they haven't got, and you have taken an interest of one undivided third in their expectations?"

I felt the hot blood rise to my cheeks, and I answered:

"My clients propose to contest the will of your late father. They believe that by some racially artfulness of your own, you managed to substitute the present will for one made more in their favour; and you will excuse my remarking that I don't think they are far out of the way."

He drew down his heavy eyebrows and studied me curiously.

"I beg your pardon," said he, "but I think this is not business. They think me a great scoundrel! I admit the compliment, and ask them what they are going to do about it? They accuse me of unduly influencing my father. Perhaps they may not find it easy to prove that. I come home from my business abroad, and find my father in his last sickness; I stay by his side, taking care of him, and he leaves me his property. Who should he leave it to? I don't say that I did not compel him; I don't deny that there was the most frightful irregularity; but there is the will for you to peek at. That is the nut for you to crack, my young friend. Hammer away, and when you get a hole, let me know."

I did not speak, and he sat for a while looking as if well pleased with himself; then he began again.

"Do I see Ellen in your face? I think so. Well, I am sorry; but as I remarked before, the perversity

of women is astonishing,—more's the pity for themselves. My Aunt Morris was unfortunate enough to offend her father Barsac, but she should have counted the cost. She chose love over money, and now she wants to get the money too. I am old enough to know better, but I am making the same choice as she did: I have the money, and I offer to give it away for love. I offer it to Ellen, but she refuses it. I pity her, poor girl, for what does she propose to do? She thinks she can take it *vi et armis*. You are a lawyer, Mr. Mason, I think your card states. Well, look you here. I have the possession, in the first place, which you will allow is nine points; then I have the money to fight the matter with, and she hasn't, that is the tenth point. In short, I am in and she is out. Do I not make it plain to you?"

"Decidedly, you are a blackguard," I thought; but I said: "My clients think as I told you just now, but their opinion is not mine. I think this will be very likely all right."

He could not quite conceal his surprise.

"You know that's a lie," he said, "but suppose I believe it. Has Ellen sent you to plead the cause of the widow and the fatherless with me? Do they think that after showing their own weakness by trying to frighten me, they can now induce me to take pity on their weakness? Yes; that is woman's way exactly."

"I don't see the point of your repeated references to Miss Morris. Be so good as to understand, once for all, that I am acting in this matter in the interest of my clients; as any lawyer would act; and not otherwise."

"Not quite the truth, Mr. Mason," said Mr. Vinton; "but let it pass. You were beginning to state some opinion of yours just now."

"I was saying that I think this will of yours is quite likely to be sound, and was about to add that possibly the same soundness may not extend far back."

"Indeed!"

"Suppose, Mr. Vinton," I resumed, "that some mistake has been covered all along till now; suppose that your mother really failed to comply with the conditions on which she was to inherit; suppose you came in opportunely to stop a gap in the chain, or that you are not your father's son at all, if you will pardon my facetious expression?"

I hoped to produce some sort of effect, but I could not have been prepared for what actually followed. He ran to me, with hasty steps, squatted suddenly before me, seized both my hands in his, and looked at me with a face which might have been a dramatist's ideal of conscience-stricken terror. I thought of Macbeth smitten at the banquet, for if Mr. Vinton's fear was not genuine, it was an admirable counterfeit; his eyes glowed as they encountered mine—they seemed like living intelligences in themselves.

"Mr. Mason, my dear, good fellow," he said, sinking his voice to a low and almost self-growl—"do you really mean to hint that you suspect anything of that kind? You are frightful, horrible, actually make me shudder—to speak so about the dead! Come, you are fooling—*nil mortuis*, you know. Have they named any son? Are they hard not against me? Would five thousand pounds, or ten thousand, be any inducement to compromise for the sake of the dead?"

I was too dumfounded to answer at once, and sat staring very stupidly at him, while he quietly rose and walked back to his former position.

A knock at the door; a servant came in with letters.

He rose at the same time, but, catching his foot awkwardly in the floor-matting, he stumbled, and in falling, his loose dressing-gown caught on one of the angular knobs of his desk and tore through everything to the skin, showing a singular mark on his flesh which I will not describe now, as I shall have occasion to refer to it hereafter. With this last impression of him, I took my leave.

I went to my office to think it over, and was far from satisfied with the results of my visit. That he was a scoundrel I knew at first as well as I did then; yet I thought he was not so indifferent to the matter as he seemed. Did I really touch a weak spot and frighten him, or was it an admirably-executed scene for effect? Was his fear real fear, or only assumed to conceal fear and gain time for thought, or to study me at a closer view? It was a delicate question to decide; I was confident of his wits, but far less so of my own; but finally my thoughts resolved the matter in this form: "You have not touched his defences. He did all his acting deliberately, meaning to study you. He is a man of ability, and feels himself master of his position."

Six weeks passed, and I had not gained a step. I had contested the will of Henry Vinton the elder, but the case was not yet decided, though with every prospect of an unfavourable issue. One morning, in coming down to breakfast, I found Mrs. Morris unusually excited. She had been waiting for me restlessly; Ellen wanted to see me, for she had a singular dream she must tell me.

"Last night," she said, "when I first went into my room, and was thinking about various things, though

this affair of ours was not one of them, I heard the clock strike ten, and I started and picked up the lamp, and went to the glass and began to undo my hair, and probably I fell into a dose. But all at once I saw a long, low, dim-lighted room before me, or I seemed to be in it, crouched in a corner, the farthest away from the light; the roof was crossed with rough, white-washed beams, and there was a lamp hung on a hook and swinging backwards and forwards, and I smelt something like a mixture of different sorts of spices, and heard the water washing on the outside, so I knew it was a ship's cabin. Some one was lying in bed with her back to me—I knew it was a woman, because I heard her moaning—and a nurse was sitting at the foot, holding a baby which only appeared to be a few days old, and presently she took a thing from the table that looked like a steel comb with a long handle and sharp points, and struck the child with it on his left shoulder, just under the shoulder-blade. It left a row of little dots of blood on the skin when she took it off, and she gave a kind of grunt to herself as she looked at it, and then she took a piece of what seemed to be Indian-ink, and drew it over the place, rubbing it afterwards with both her hands. I could partially distinguish the outlines of the vessel, and I saw a long hull, and the gilt letters on the bow; but they were rubbed and indistinct, and I could only read three letters—NDA—and then the ship faded off.

"I saw nothing more for some time, and when I did it was the sea, tossing as if there had just been a storm. It was all black, and no ship in sight; but finally I saw a mast or a spar, or some kind of piece, rolling about with the waves; a woman was lashed to one end, and at the other was a sailor holding on by one arm and a rope passed round his waist, and having a child tied to his back; I watched them a little, and then it grew fainter and I saw the round frame of my glass, and my own face looking out at me. I wasn't a bit frightened, and I went directly to look at the clock; it was only five minutes past ten, and I had the very pin in my fingers that I pulled out when I first stepped before the glass. I have told you the dream, now declare the interpretation thereof."

"It is very curious, certainly, but I am no Daniel. Have you ever read, or heard, or seen anything that could suggest such a dream?"

"Nothing whatever; everything about it is perfectly new."

"You spoke of a mark that you saw the nurse make, can you describe it?"

"Not very easily," she replied, "but I can draw something like it."

She took a pencil and sketched it. I do not remember ever having seen anything like it; but as I sat in my office in the dark that evening it flashed on me that that was the identical mark I had seen tattooed on Henry Vinton's shoulder.

Here was food for conjecture. Might he not have torn his gown on purpose? I was inclined, however, to consider it accidental. I had not spoken of this to Mrs. Morris, and surely she knew nothing of the mark or she would have told me. Perhaps Henry Vinton had been born on shipboard. But that was nothing, for his claim by the will would be just as good as ever; yet I drew this inference, that if he was born on the water he was not born on the land; and if it was before his mother arrived and was married, he was not born six weeks after her marriage. An obvious deduction, but one that implied something, after all. Only there was a weak spot somewhere, or there would have been no mystery.

Six months wore away, and I was at my wit's end. The contested will case had been decided, leaving for our share the heavy bill of costs, and I began to believe in Mr. Vinton's phrase, "the perversity of women," since my friends had not been satisfied with being no poorer than they were. Alone in my office, I fell to thinking of the letters Ellen read on the ship's bow. Marine intelligence and records were not so plentiful then as in later times, and it was not easy to obtain information of what happened thirty years ago; there was nothing to be done, unless I read over whole columns of names in the shipping-lists in the hope of meeting the one, and so I sat and puzzled. "NDA"—they didn't begin the word, they must be middle or end. I grew tired of groping in the dark. "No!" I ejaculated, thinking of the Arabian Nights, and giving my knee a slap, "the thief in the cave couldn't think of 'Open Sesame,' and I couldn't think of this word if it would open me the door to the mines of Golconda."

"Golconda!" The very word! I jumped up and lit a lamp, and wrote it down and looked at it. What else had those three letters? I thought of "Anacanda," nobody would give such a name to a ship, but a ship is an argosy, and its cargo is represented by gold and jewels, and so I settled it that the ship was the Golconda.

I was excited and all in a tremor, and I went out.

I passed at random through the narrow lanes, and finally entered a coffee-house, and ordered refreshment.

As I leaned back, looking musingly at the walls, a voice in the next box to mine, separated from my head

only by the thin partition, caught my ear, and I listened.

"When did you say you're to sail, Tinker?"

"Day arter to-morrow," growled the sailor's voice. "Got my interest all right, ye know; cargo's most snuggled away."

"Well, I never see a man come so nice out of a scrape as you did. I swear I'd like to be a passenger that trip. They'd a chance to get suited on a ship, for you takes and sinks 'em in the Golconda, and then the Albatross picks you off and fetches you in. Dash me if that warn't a time!"

"So ye told Vinton, didn't ye? He was ragin' mad at me for lettin' ye know so much."

"Well, I swear I 'tain't right, Tinker, to bleed a man the way you're doing, sticking to him so like a leech."

"An old land-shark like you's nothin' to say 'bout suckin' blood," cried the sailor, hitting the table. "It's his own offer. I can't tell so much as his old nurse. I dunno what he's skeet about; but don't an old chap like me want to be stowin' a few shot in the locker, an' if he wants to pay me for not tellin' that Jane Barsac died on the old Golconda, an' I hitched the boy round my neck an' saved him—where's the harm?—Pay yer score, an' let's steer out."

I followed them as they went out, and until I saw them enter a low, sailors' boarding-house, of which, I knew well, the man Halsey was keeper.

Early on the following day I went to Mr. Vinton. If I judged his looks rightly, he was tired of amusing himself with me, and meant to rid himself of me with a brief interview.

"Well, Mr. Mason," he said, very shortly, "have you settled the costs?"

"I have another matter to settle first, and I will be as short as yourself. Captain Tinker, formerly of the Golconda, is in Bristol."

"Well," he said, with a ludicrous scowl, "and what the devil is Captain Tinker to me?"

"Just this," I said: "don't credit yourself with having all the scoundrelism of your name; you inherited some of it. I learn from good authority that Jane Barsac died on shipboard, and that you were born on shipboard."

I looked at him. His face was quite colourless; he had set his teeth, and gripped the arm of the chair, but he did not speak.

"So much I know," I proceeded, "but the details I do not know, and you do. Captain Tinker cannot leave till I say the word, and he will be forthcoming at my call. I ask you to choose whether you will tell me the whole truth about this quietly, or refuse and let the case be fought out."

"But—you know the terms of Emanuel Barsac's will?"

"Perfectly. Make your choice, Mr. Vinton; tell me, and we will then talk of terms; or I will go back—just as you prefer."

He considered a while.

"I take you at your word, Mr. Mason, for you have stopped me finally. The facts are these: Henry Vinton was my father, and Jane Barsac, who never was a Vinton, was my mother. I was born at sea, an illegitimate child, while she was on her return from Martinique. She perished with the Golconda, and my father was married to Jane Colby, a servant, who perfectly resembled her, and he took the property, passing me off as their child. It was a fine arrangement, but your confounded good luck has spoiled it. But don't imagine that you have any better hold on me than I have on you; it's about six of one, and half-a-dozen of the other. Just remember that if all this comes out publicly, neither party can keep the property."

"My clients will lose the whole before they will allow you to keep it. You must compromise."

"Exactly. You can't have it, and I can't have it; we must agree. I promise to make it all right with them."

"That won't answer, Mr. Vinton," said I; "my card, you remember, says I am a lawyer. Here is a schedule of certain specifications of real estate, which I take to be about a fair division; and here are deeds of the same to Louisa Morris, ready for your signature. I believe you will find the descriptions correct."

"Do you take me for a fool? Did you ever play at bluff?"

"Not at all; I advance to meet you, and leave you to meet me or not. Follow your free will, Mr. Vinton; the decision rests wholly with you. You can suit yourself about signing, as I can in the use I shall make of Captain Tinker."

He signed the papers in order, but held them back from my hand.

"What security have I that you will not hereafter bring this up again, and be hounding at me for a second division?"

"Is that a sensible question?" I replied. "Your security is the obvious one of Mrs. Morris's own interest."

I took the deeds, and left him; and one side of the case, at least, was satisfied with the result. I have no theory to offer in explanation of Ellen Morris's singular

dream, which is not the first well-proven instance where facts have been revealed in this way, which were never consciously in the mind of the dreamer. There seems sometimes to be an unwonted accession of power to the sleeping soul, as if it attained somewhat of the expansion and freedom which it will have when relieved of the earthly body.

A. J.

THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY AT THE ANTIPODES.

THE splendid illuminations which testified to the royal rejoicings for the nuptials of the Prince of Wales at Melbourne were repeated with increased brilliancy on the anniversary of the natal day of his illustrious mother. This mark of respect was not confined to Melbourne, but was general throughout the colony on her Majesty's birthday.

The levee held by the governor in honour of the occasion was marked by a very interesting ceremonial. A deputation from the Yarra and Goulburn tribes of the aborigines waited on his Excellency and presented an address, in the native tongue, to the "Great Mother Queen Victoria," of which the following is a translation:—"Blacks of the tribes of Wawoorong Boonoorong, and Tara-Waragal, send this to the Great Mother Queen Victoria. We and other blackfellows send very many thanks to the Great Mother Queen for many, many things. Blackfellows now throw away all war spears. No more fighting, but live like white men almost. Blackfellows hear that your first son has married. Very good that! Black fellows send all good to him, and to you, his Great Mother Victoria. Blackfellows came from Miam and Willam to bring this paper to the good Governor. He will tell you more. All blackfellows round about agree to this. This is all."

His Excellency said it would afford him great pleasure to transmit the address and translation to her Majesty, who would, he did not doubt, be glad to hear of the loyalty of the natives of this colony, whatever colour, white or dark. He would take the opportunity of informing them that her Majesty would be much pleased to hear that they were now as peacefully disposed as their white brethren.

Mr. Thomas, the protector of the aborigines, explained to his Excellency their desire to transmit to the Queen and the Prince and Princess of Wales some specimens of their manufacture; a portion to her Majesty, and the remainder to the Prince and Princess of Wales. One of the aborigines, the tallest of them, then approached his Excellency, and laid before him an opossum-skin rug, on which he placed his own spear. From the other aborigines he then collected five additional spears, and several waddies and other articles.

THE portrait of the late Admiral Sir Charles Napier, K.C.B., has been presented by his daughter, Mrs. Jodrell, to the Senior United Service Club, who, considering the Royal Hospital, Greenwich, the most proper place for its reception, in turn presented it to the commissioners; but they, the commissioners, declined to receive it, "not considering it to possess sufficient artistic merit to be placed in the Painted Hall." The portrait was painted by Joy, in 1853 (the same artist who painted that of Sir Robert Stopford, G.C.B., late Governor of the Hospital, and which now graces the Painted Hall). It is an excellent and truthful likeness of the gallant old admiral, and as a work of art certainly well worthy of being placed with others in the hall. It is asserted that the commissioners have other reasons for rejecting the portrait of one who was, while he lived, a zealous and active reformer of the abuses said to exist in that establishment.

TOO LOUD TALK BEFORE MARRIAGE.—Some time since the salons of Paris were entertained by a matrimonial adventure, the hero being the son of one of the wealthiest bankers. The gentleman was engaged to marry a young lady of high rank, and everything was prepared. The bridegroom had sent in the *corbeille*, which was extremely rich, the diamonds alone being worth over one hundred thousand francs. Wishing to enjoy the gratification of his bride, he followed closely on the heels of his present, and finding no one in the parlour, he ensconced himself in a window behind the curtain. Presently a whole bevy of girls flattered into the room, and all began talking at once. "Oh, did you ever see such a beautiful *corbeille*? Louise is lucky; what a gentleman husband she will have!" "She ought to be happy, to be sure; but do you know what she told me just now?—why, that she would rather have the *corbeille* without the gentleman who gave it." "It can't be—she never said so." "She certainly did, and there she is—ask her for yourself. Louise, didn't you tell me you would rather have the *corbeille* alone without Mr. —?" "Yes, I say so; but that's between ourselves." "Much obliged to you, mademoiselle," said Mr. —, coming forward, "you shall not have either." So saying, he coolly put the splendid present under his arm, and walked off, leaving the ladies in an embarrassment "easier conceived than expressed."

THE LONDON READER.

FOR THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 12, 1863.

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

THE address of each successive President of the British Association is looked forward to not merely by persons actively engaged in scientific pursuits, but by others—and these the majority—who, having neither time nor opportunity for the perusal of widely-scattered documents and heavy tomes, still like to know, from year to year, what progress science has made. The inaugural address of Sir William Armstrong upon the present occasion is eminently popular both in its subjects and the treatment of them, and will be referred to with interest, not less on account of its various subjects than for the acknowledged talent of its author.

The British Association held its first meeting at York on 27th September, 1831, under the presidency of the late Earl Fitzwilliam, then Viscount Milton, and at that time not even its most sanguine friends could have anticipated so great a success as that which it has since attained. At this first meeting of the association, the Rev. W. Vernon-Harcourt, its vice-president, very clearly explained that want in the scientific world for the supply of which the new association had been formed. This description has since been adopted as the official exposition of the objects of the society, and it stands each year at the head of the annual volume of its transactions. It is—"To give a stronger impulse and more systematic direction to scientific inquiry; to promote the intercourse of those who cultivate science in different parts of the empire with one another, and with foreign philosophers; and to obtain a more general attention to the objects of science, and a removal of any disadvantages of a public kind which impede its progress."

The late Prince Consort, when president of the association in 1859, explained, in one of the most able of his many excellent addresses, his notion of the object of the association and its sphere of duties. "To me," said his Royal Highness, "science, in its most general and comprehensive acceptation, means the knowledge of what I know—the consciousness of human knowledge. Hence to know is the object of all science; and all special knowledge, if brought to our consciousness in its separate distinctiveness from, and yet in its recognized relation to, the locality of our knowledge, is scientific knowledge." "The labours of the man of science," the Prince said, "are at once the most humble and the loftiest which man can undertake. He only does what every little child does from its first waking into life, and must do every moment of its existence. The child observes what accident lays before it, and unconsciously forms its notion of it; the so-called practical man observes what his special work forces upon him, and he forms his notions upon it with reference to this particular work. The tendency to create new science is peculiarly apparent in our present age, and is perhaps inseparable from so rapid a progress as we see in our days, for the acquaintance with and mastering of distinct branches of knowledge enables the eye, from the newly-gained points of sight, to see the new ramifications into which they divide themselves in strict consecutiveness and with logical necessity. But in thus gaining new centres of light from which to direct our researches, and new and powerful means of adding to its ever-increasing treasures, science approaches no nearer to the limits of its range, although travelling further and further from its original point of departure. For God's world is infinite, and the boundlessness of the universe, whose confines appear ever to retreat before our finite minds, strikes us no less with awe when, prying into the starry crowd of heaven, we find new worlds revealed to us by every increase of the power of the telescope, than when the microscope discloses to us in a drop of water or an atom of dust new worlds of animation, or the remains of such as have passed away. It has occasionally been given to rare intellects and the highest genius to follow the various sciences in their divergent roads, and yet to preserve that point of sight from which alone their totality can be contemplated and directed. Yet how rare is the appearance of such gifted intellects? And if they be found at intervals, they still remain single individuals with all the imperfections of human nature. The only mode of supplying with any certainty this want is to be sought in the combination of men of science representing all the specialities, and working together for the common object of preserving that unity and presiding over that general direction. These meetings draw forth the philosopher from the hidden re-

cesses of his study, call in the wanderer over the fields of science to meet his brethren, to lay before them the result of his labours, to set forth the deductions at which he has arrived, to ask for their examination, to maintain in the combat of debate the truth of his position and the accuracy of his observations. These meetings, unlike those of any other society, throw open the arena to the cultivators of all sciences to their mutual advantage. The geologist learns from the chemist that there are problems of which he had no clue, but which that science can solve for him; the geographer receives light from the naturalist, the astronomer from the physicist and engineer, and so on. And all find a field upon which to meet the public at large, invite them to listen to their reports, and even to take part in their discussions; show to them that philosophers are not vain theorists, but essentially men of practice—not conceited pedants wrapped up in their own mysterious importance, but humble inquirers after truth, proud only of what they may have achieved or won for the general use of man. Neither are they daring and presumptuous unbelievers—a character which ignorance has sometimes affixed to them—who would, like the Titans, storm heaven by placing mountain upon mountain till hurled down from the height they had attained by the terrible thunders of outraged Jove, but rather the pious pilgrims to the Holy Land, who toil on in search of the sacred shrine—in search of truth, God's truth—God's laws as manifested by His works in His creation."

Upon the present occasion the members of the association assembled at Newcastle-on-Tyne on the 26th of August, 1863, when Sir William Armstrong, C.B., LL.D., F.R.S., on succeeding to the presidential chair, vacated by the resignation of the Rev. Robert Willis, delivered the inaugural address, in which he observed that a quarter of a century had elapsed since the association had assembled in Newcastle, and that in no former period of equal duration had so great progress been made in physical knowledge, in mechanical science, and especially in those branches of it which are concerned in the application of steam-power to effect interchange between distant communities. The progress made since the year 1838 has no parallel in history. The railway system was then in its infancy, and the great problem of transatlantic steam navigation had only received its complete solution in the preceding year. Since that time railways have extended to every continent, and steamships have covered the ocean. These reflections claimed attention on that occasion, because the locality in which the meeting was held is the birthplace of railways, and because the coal mines of the district have contributed more largely than any others to supply the motive power by which steam communication by land and water has been established on so gigantic a scale.

The history of railways shows what grand results may have their origin in small beginnings. When coal was first conveyed in this neighbourhood from the pit to the shipping-place on the Tyne, the pack-horse, carrying a burden of 3 cwt., was the only means of transport employed. As soon as roads suitable for wheeled carriages were formed, carts were introduced, and this first step in mechanical appliance to facilitate transport had the effect of increasing the load which the horse was enabled to convey from 3 cwt. to 17 cwt. The next improvement consisted in laying wooden bars or rails for the wheels of the carts to run upon, and this was followed by the substitution of the four-wheeled wagon for the two-wheeled cart. By this further application of mechanical principles the original horseload of 3 cwt. was increased to 42 cwt. "These," said the president, "were important results, and they were not obtained without the shipwreck of the fortunes of at least one adventurous man, whose ideas were in advance of the times in which he lived." In a work published in 1649, it is recorded that one Master Beaumont, a gentleman of great ingenuity and rare parts, adventured into the mines of Northumberland with his £30,000, and brought with him many rare engines, not then known in that shire, and waggons, with one horse to carry down coal from the pits to the river; but within a few years he consumed all his money, and rode home upon his light horse."

The next step in the progress of railways was the attachment of slips of iron to the wooden rails. Then came the iron tramway, consisting of cast-iron bars of an angular section; in this arrangement the upright flange of the bar acted as a guide to keep the wheel on the track. The next advance was an important one and consisted in transferring the guiding flange from the rail to the wheel. This improvement enabled cast-iron edge rails to be used. Finally, in 1820, after the lapse of 200 years from the first employment of wooden bars, wrought-iron rails rolled into long lengths and of suitable section, were made in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, and eventually superseded all other forms of railway. Thus the railway system, like all large inventions, has arisen to its present importance by a series of steps, and so gradual has been its progress that Europe finds itself committed to a gauge fortuitously determined by the distance between the wheels

of the carts for which wooden rails were originally laid down.

Last of all came the locomotive engine, that crowning achievement of mechanical science, which enables us to convey a load of 200 tons at a cost of fuel scarcely exceeding that of the corn and hay which the original pack-horse consumed in conveying its load of 3 cwt. an equal distance.

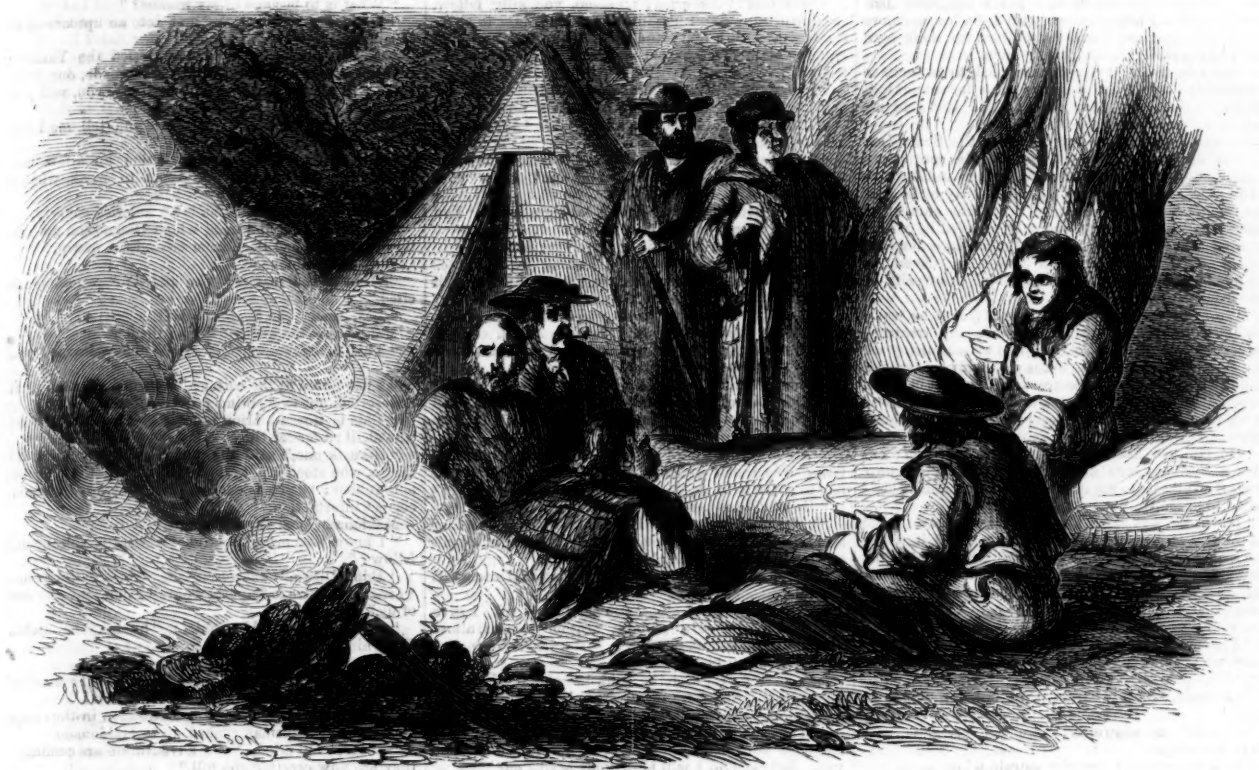
It was chiefly in the locality around Newcastle that the railway system was thus reared from earliest infancy to full maturity; and amongst the many names associated with its growth, that of George Stephenson stands pre-eminent.

In thus glancing at the history of railways, the speaker observed, we may note how promptly the inventive faculty of man supplies the device which the circumstances of the moment require. No sooner is a road formed fit for wheeled carriages to pass along, than the cart takes the place of the pack-saddle; no sooner is the wooden railway provided, than the wagon is substituted for the cart; and no sooner is an iron railway formed capable of carrying heavy loads than the locomotive engine is found ready to commence its career. As in the vegetable kingdom its conditions of soil and climate quickly cause the appearance of suitable plants, so in the intellectual world fitness of time and circumstance promptly call forth appropriate devices. The seeds of invention exist, as it were, in the air, ready to germinate whenever suitable conditions arise, and no legislative interference is needed to ensure their growth in proper season.

From the topic of locomotion and the railway system, the President of the British Association naturally passed to the subject of the coal beds of the country. We have read that the mere process of carting the product of the mine from the pit-mouth to the quay suggested the tramway; the tramway was father of the iron rail; the iron rail made the locomotive possible; and with the locomotive, thanks again to coal, we can drag 200 tons weight for a mile at a cost of fuel not exceeding that of the corn and hay which a pack-horse would consume to draw 3 cwt. an equal distance. Applied with still greater economy, as in our best engines, one pound weight of this costly treasure which nature has hoarded for us can produce an effect in combustion equal to lifting a million of pounds one foot high! Of this magnificent dowry of strength, the gift of God to England, and in a vast measure the secret of her influence and position, we are expending and exporting annually 86,000,000 tons. Arithmetic and imagination shrink together from estimating the annual increase to the mere muscular force of the realm which the product of these figures signify; they quadruple, they centuple our population; in our locomotives, our machines, our steam-ships, our factories, they add the vigour of 10,000,000 arms to the heads at work for Britain. The silent and sultry noons of pre-Adamic days all passed that we, in these modern times, might work, travel, produce, and be warm with their garnered sunshine.

It becomes, then, the gravest, the most important question conceivable, how long these buried treasures will last us. Sir William Armstrong puts it with the full consciousness that he is asking, in other words, how long will England's greatness and strength continue under present circumstances? Nor is the reply altogether satisfactory. Mr. Tennyson calls us "the heirs of all the ages;" but we are a good deal too much like prodigal heirs, who have stumbled upon and dug up a treasure, and spend it as if it were inexhaustible. It is far from being so, however. The extent of the coal-fields is pretty accurately estimated at eighty thousand millions of tons; and if our annual consumption advance at its present rate, we should run through this in about two hundred years. At that distance of time we, the present generation of men, will certainly not be travelling upon this globe, nor warming ourselves at terrestrial fires, nor fretting about the outlook of the coal-market, and the price of mining shares; but posterity is entitled to some consideration; and besides, long before we have gone as deep and as wide as we can go under necessity into the coal-seams, prices will run up and we shall be uncomfortably near "the central fires."

It is not without reason, therefore, that the President points out to us how we waste this precious dower; how we might realise, with economy in fuel, thirty times as much effect by our steam engines as we do at present; and what a monstrous prodigality and extravagance is smoke. We burn yearly, in household fires alone, about thirty million tons of coal, which is worth nearly the same as the entire income-tax, and one-fifth of the quantity, properly used, would cook our food and warm our toes, and give the luxury of the ingle-blaze beside. The smoke and heat that we send up the house chimneys alone, in Britain, represent thus about twenty-four million tons of fuel, which, worked out on the formula we have given, would lift to the height of one foot—if our printer only has figures to express our calculation—53,760,000,000,000 pounds avoirdupois. This force we waste annually in making the air foul, and chimney-sweeping a prosperous trade.



THE SILVER DIGGER.

CHAPTER XXXIII

DIEGO'S STORY.

Diego, perfectly unconscious of the fate of his master, continued his gastronomical display, paying no heed whatever to the movements of those round him, and noticing none of the nods and winks and concealed jests of his companions.

Evening drew in apace, and the stars twinkled merrily in the heavens.

The encampment looked highly picturesque.

It was, as I have said, on the crest of a hill overhanging as it were the Raven's Nest Pass, and overhung itself by mountains whose summits were now lost in the shadow of the Great Night, but which in the daytime sparkled in the bright sunlight, blue and fresh, and cloudless.

The white tents of the robbers dotted the green table-land which extended from the ravine to the commencement of the slope, where the trees of a miniature forest overshadowed them.

It was on the edge of the ravine that Diego sat enjoying his evening meal with three or four of the roughest of the company round him.

He went on chattering and laughing, boasting of his exploits and narrating several adventures which were chiefly notable for their comical impossibility.

Somehow or another it seemed the object of the assembled thieves, to lead him on and make him talk. Probably it was to distract his attention from the lengthened absence of his master.

"I could tell you a fine story," said Diego, looking round proudly, while one of the men poured him out a bumper of Mexican wine. "I could tell you a fine story about an adventure of mine with a Mexican beauty some years since, only I expect my master back every minute, and it isn't worth while beginning a story unless you go through with it."

"Christopher Columbus!" cried a tall, raw-boned Yankee, who was about the most ill-looking of the whole party. "You don't know perhaps where your master is?"

"With Captain Limarez."

There was a general laugh.

"What on airth are you laughing at?" cried the Yankee. "He wor with Captain Limarez, but I reckon he ain't now!"

"Where is he then?" asked Diego, considerably puzzled.

"He's with the Senora Rosenha, the captain's lady,"

[DIEGO'S STORY.]

said one of the men, "she's too beautiful and too fascinating to let him come away."

Diego chuckled significantly. He appeared to have no conception of the ridiculous position in which he stood.

"But where is Senor Torre?" he said.

"What! the old silver-digger?"

"Yes."

"He is with your master. By the bye, who is your master?"

"Conrad Mion."

The old Yankee chuckled.

"Oh! then if it's Captain Mion, he can't be back just yet."

"Why?"

"Because," said the Yankee, who was intensely amused by the squire's simplicity, "because he is a man of such gallantry. But come, let us have this story. I warrant me it is a good one."

"Well," said Diego, pulling a face of importance; "it is a good one; though now that age has added to my honesty, I am almost ashamed to confess it. However, as you wish it, and my master seems so long, I will out with it and tell all."

"It is now ten years ago since I and my master, Don Pedro Gusman, were returning from the city of Nuevo Spenza. We were skirting the forest which overhangs the high road; and as we had heard reports of queer characters hovering about we kept a sharp look-out, and watched every leaf and branch that stirred."

"Evening was coming on, and the golden glow of the coming sunset hovered over the western hills."

"We were nearing the hacienda, which lies between Nuevo Spenza and the Harbour of Licares, when we were startled by the sound of many voices, which seemed to issue from a little isolated clump of trees on the left of our route."

"What can that be?" said my master; "it sounds to me like the voices of women."

"My master was of rather a gallant turn of mind, and being unmarried, he was constantly on the look-out for some Mexican maiden whose beauty might be sweetened by a fortune."

"In accordance with his wishes we alighted, therefore, and tying our horses to a tree, we made our way cautiously, nay, stealthily, towards the spot whence the laughter proceeded. We soon neared it, and found a scene which surprised as much as it edified us."

"Two young girls—no doubt mistress and servant—were disputing like mermaids in the waves of a bright tank, bobbing up and down in innocence and glee. They shrieked loudly when they saw us, and hid themselves in the water until we could see nothing but their

heads. Don Pedro was, as I have said, excessively gallant; and taking off his hat to the bathing damsels, he said:

"Senoras, you must excuse our abrupt interruption of your bath; but we have lost our way, and are anxious to hear of some house where we can find shelter for the night."

"At first the young lady seemed doubtful about answering the cavalier who spoke to her under such extraordinary circumstances; but at length, after a whispered consultation with her maid, he said:

"My father's house, senor, is open to every stranger who needs a shelter."

"And where is that, senora?"

"It is the hacienda (cattle-farm) there amid the trees yonder. He is at home, and will welcome you gladly."

"His name fair lady?"

"Don Estevan de Mendoza, senor," replied the damsel, "and now allow me to request your departure, as the water is becoming chilly, and I desire to return home."

"Don Pedro bowed, and we both returned to our horses. We were soon galloping towards the hacienda, and actively discussing the respective merits of the two beauties, who, in spite of the fact that such a state of nature levels all distinction, appeared, as I have said, like mistress and maid."

"It was nearly dark when we reached the hacienda belonging to Don Estevan de Mendoza. It stood on the edge of the forest and was surrounded by numerous outbuildings, while its meadows and grazing fields stretched away on all sides for miles."

"We rattled into a large court-yard, and were met as we alighted by a tall, fine-looking man of some fifty-five years of age, whose whole bearing proved him to be of pure Spanish blood."

"He glanced at us inquiringly, but immediately we mentioned our meeting with his daughter he welcomed us gladly, and offered us shelter for as long a period as we pleased. The first thing we required, however, was supper, and this we immediately requested. It was served in about half-an-hour after our arrival, and the fair daughter of our host presided at the feast."

"We ascertained, however, before her arrival that he had been ten years in Mexico, that he was of an old Spanish family, that he had found in the new world a rich mine of wealth, and that the broad acres he had redeemed from the forest and the plain were the property of his only daughter after his death."

"I, as his squire, was placed among the servants, among whom I soon recognized my fair bather, and it was not long before we were on excellent terms with one another. My master, on the other hand, made as

good progress with the worthy host's daughter, Isabella; but as my acquaintance with Julia led to more serious consequences, I will leave them to their own love-making and proceed with my own.

"The quarters, which were accorded to us were so comfortable that we had a good excuse for remaining, and before three days had passed Julia had told me everything concerning the family.

"It resulted from my inquiries that the Senor Don Estevan de Mendoza carried on a little contraband trade in addition to his legitimate calling; and she confided to me, as a great secret, that in the bay of Licares was lying a vessel containing an immense number of silver bars. This treasure was only guarded by an old decrepit man. No one knew of the treasure but her self, Senor Mendoza, and his daughter. Even the old man was not aware of the extent of the wealth he guarded.

"With this wealth I and my master (for as he was a good master I desired to share with him my treasure) were to fly to America. Julia was to accompany us, and she expressed no fear as to the probability of Isabella joining us in the event of success. It was night when we arranged upon the attempt, and as my master was an adventurer and not over-scrupulous, I had no hesitation in taking him into my confidence.

"He laughed heartily when I first told him; but after a few moments he began to understand how much it would be to his interest to accede, and he consented to accompany me.

"It was ten o'clock on a dark night when we started for the bay of Licares, and when we reached it it lay like a sheet of steel before us—bright, beautiful, calm. There were very few vessels there, and we easily recognized the craft mentioned by Julia by the entire absence of sails. It lay quite close to the wharf, so that it only required one leap to be on board.

"The old man was sitting on the deck smoking when we reached the ship, and we hailed him.

"Who goes there?" he cried.

"Friends," I said; "from Don Estevan de Mendoza."

"Good!" he answered; "are you come to take away the cargo?"

"Don Pedro could scarcely restrain a laugh.

"Yes," he replied, "that is exactly what we are going to do. But let us on board, for it will not do to talk about these things aloud. The winds may have ears!"

"Right!" said the old man, bringing out a lantern; "see, here is a plank by which you can cross. It is very dark—mind how you step."

"We were soon on board, and having reconnoitred a little and busied ourselves so as to completely deceive the old man, we induced him to allow us to descend. The hold was very dark and slippery, but the cabin in which the old chap stowed himself away at night was comfortable enough, and here we sat and talked, the ocean around us being all the while as quiet as a lake.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A SEQUEL TO THE STORY OF DIEGO.

"WHEN we were comfortably seated," said the worthy squire, "the old man said:

"And now gentlemen, what are Don Estevan's instructions?"

"They are simple," returned Diego; "you know the bay of Narvaez?"

"Yes—well."

"To that bay we are to sail to-night."

"The old man started.

"You forget," he said, "there is not a scrap of canvas on the boat. How can we sail?"

"Don Pedro laughed.

"Don Estevan," he said, "is a man who provides for all emergencies. We are both good sailors, and if you are afraid to trust yourself with us, why we have only to tell Don Estevan that you would not come."

"Oh, no," said the old man, "I am not afraid. I only thought it difficult. But come, let us go aloft and try our hands."

"We went aloft, and in the course of half-an-hour, we had hoisted enough of canvas to carry us to Spain. We then slipped cable, and in a few minutes were clear of the harbour, and sailing merrily towards Senora.

"But the women," I ventured to suggest, knowing the gallantry of my master.

"The devil take the women," cried Don Pedro, "we have the money, and I'm not going to risk that by returning to fetch them. We must now see to the old man. I will take the helm if you will go below and bottle him."

"I started in horror at hearing these words; and imagined that the worthy master I had served so long was nothing better than a murderer. I was soon undeceived, and discovered that he was nothing more than a thief.

"Bottle him!" I cried, "my dear master, do you intend me to kill him?"

"He laughed heartily.

"Kill him!" he cried; "no—no, you silly fellow. Go down below—get him into the cabin; offer to share the treasure with him; and then, if he refuses, bind and gag him. He's an old man, and will not be much trouble."

"Very good," I replied and descended.

"The old man was smoking his eternal pipe.

"Niccolo," I said—he was an Italian. "Niccolo, we are out at sea."

"I know it," he answered, "and it strikes me we're not anywhere near Narvaez. You don't know your way."

"Look here, old man," I said, taking a seat. "You are in the wrong box. We're pirates."

"He sat back in his chair and eyed me fixedly.

"You're too good-tempered looking for a pirate," he said, "so when you've done joking, tell me what it is you mean."

"I will," I answered, trying to look very severe.

"We're not friends of Don Estevan's at all. We've come here to carry off the treasure, and we mean to do it."

"The old man rose.

"Don Diego," he cried, "I'm an old man, but I tell you what it is: no one touches that treasure until he has first killed me."

"Nonsense," I said, "we're going to make your fortune. We're not grasping dispositions, and so if you like to share with us, do so and be welcome."

"He shook his head.

"No—no," he cried; "I've done without thieving all my life, and I don't begin now. Kill me, but don't ask me to rob my master."

"I took a revolver from my pocket, and cocked it coolly.

"Now, Niccolo," I said, "you see this pistol. I give you the choice of three things. Either join us, allow yourself to be bound, or die!"

"He went on his knees.

"I have a daughter," he said, "who depends on me for support. Spare me for her sake."

"Spare you," I said, "that is exactly what I wish to do. It is you who try and prevent my clemency. Let me bind your hands now, and no harm shall be done you. Refuse, and I will blow your brains out."

"This was reasoning which he could scarcely refuse to accede to, and accordingly I bound him kneeling as he was, and fastened his hands to a beam.

"Then I left him in the dark, and went on deck.

"What are your plans?" I inquired of Don Pedro.

"I am going to hug the shore," he said; "creep into a creek I know of near Narvaez, and then hire a vehicle in the town. Thence we shall start across country to Senora, sell our booty, and return to Spain."

"This I readily agreed to, and putting about the helm, we were in the course of two hours comfortably ensconced in a miniature bay, where the water was as calm as that of a lake. Don Pedro then left me by myself, and started for Narvaez.

"The time passed very slowly, although he was absent only a few hours. I, however, wiled away the time by talking to our old prisoner.

"At length Don Pedro arrived with a light vehicle and a sprightly and nervous horse, which he had hired of a dealer in Narvaez.

"Into this vehicle we conveyed the bars of silver, and, after releasing the old man, we started off, and by morning were many miles on our way to Senora."

"I need scarcely say, in conclusion," said Diego, "that we were not pursued. Don Estevan swore heartily at the manner in which he had lost his silver, and his daughter and maid raved at the manner in which they lost their husbands. We never made any inquiries, however. Don Pedro returned, as he said, to Spain, and I, having lost all my money, in a few years entered the service of Captain Conrad Mion."

"It need scarcely be said that there was not one word of truth in Diego's story. The whole of the adventures were the offspring of his fertile brain, and the narrative was designed for a far different purpose than that of amusing his auditors."

"The story was told to gain time, for Diego had scented mischief."

"He had seen the face of Maldonado among the scowling countenances around him, and he knew at once that his master was betrayed."

"Such a position as this was one which naturally would sharpen the wits of the most dull; and Diego at once formed a plan for the saving of his master and himself."

"Well," said one of the men, "I think, Senor Diego, you've passed through a pretty decent apprenticeship, and so you'd better join us."

"Join you! Why, you are gold-seekers, not thieves?"

"The man laughed.

"You're wrong there," he said, "we are gentlemen of the road, and jolly fellows we are. The gold-seekers have only just started. We expect them here early in the morning, and hope to use their horses and baggage."

"Well," said Diego, "there is only one obstacle."

"What is that?"

"What is to become of my master?"

"The thieves round him burst into an uproarious fit of laughter.

"Oh! he's taken good care of," cried the Yankee; "do not be alarmed about him. Maldonado, our great chief, will see to him. Well, what say you, will you join?"

"Willingly," cried Diego, "since you tell me I am safe from Conrad Mion's revenge."

"There was a whispered consultation for a few moments, and the Yankee was about to speak, when a horseman galloped up in great haste.

"Where is Senor Maldonado?" he cried eagerly.

"He is here," said a man, whom Diego had not noticed, and who had risen from behind the group.

This was Maldonado.

"What is the matter?" he added; "you seem excited."

"Yes, senor; the Senora Viva has escaped!"

Maldonado stamped angrily on the floor.

"This is bad news," he cried; "how learned you it?"

"I have been at the cottage," returned the man; "it is deserted, but everything proves a flight."

"This is Conrad Mion's device," cried Maldonado; "he shall suffer for this."

"Here is one," said the tall Yankee, pointing to Diego, who stood up quite boldly before the redoubtable robber; "here is one who can probably give you correct information."

Maldonado eyed Diego curiously.

"I know that man," he said. "What is your name, fellow?"

"Don Diego," answered the Yankee for him: "formerly squire to Captain Conrad Mion, but now one of us."

"Ah!" said the robber-chief: "he may be useful. Keep him in bonds."

Diego looked appealingly round the camp.

"Senor Maldonado," he cried, "you hear I am one of your troop. Why then, should I be bound?"

"At this moment there was a commotion in the camp, and a second horseman rushed up to Maldonado.

"Senor," he cried, "the adventurers are coming—they are now cresting the hill."

"Good!" said Maldonado. "Keep your eye on that fellow. If he complains, hang him."

He then strode away.

CHAPTER XXXV.

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE CASTLE.

"THE position of the three women left undefended in the old castle of Villaverde was anything but enviable. Barred and bolted in as they were, it was certainly in their power to sustain a somewhat lengthened siege; but yet women are apt to be distracted when alone by the slightest circumstances.

The first few hours were spent in talking about the strange events of the last two days, and as hour after hour went by without bringing even the appearance of an enemy, their courage seemed to rise proportionably.

"If Conrad were here," said Viva, "I should fear nothing!"

Enriqueta, who was somewhat strong-minded, shrugged her shoulders with some contempt.

"What is the use of one man to defend three women?" she said; "he would only be in the way."

The Senora Mion smiled.

"You are wrong, my worthy dame," she said; "you would find Conrad far from being in the way. I should be quite comfortable and easy in my mind were he here with us."

As she spoke there was a loud murmur without, as if the wind were rushing violently amid the rains.

The three women started.

"What is that?" cried Viva.

"It is the wind only," returned Enriqueta.

Again came the sound.

"That is not the wind," said the Senora Mion; "it sounds more like the quick opening and shutting of a door. Let us listen!"

She rose and applied her ear to the keyhole.

She was right—it was not the wind.

Placed as she was, she could distinctly overhear a conversation, which she afterwards repeated to her fellow captives.

Two persons, men evidently from their voices, were engaged in a discussion as to the probable meaning of the sounds in the room below.

"I am certain that some one is concealed there,"

said one; "I crept down the stone staircase at the back of the room, and listened."

"What did you hear?"

"I heard voices—the voices of women engaged in a lively conversation. They appeared to be quite satisfied with their position, for neither their words nor their voices expressed any degree of alarm."

The stranger laughed.

"Well," he said, "they are probably here for some

freak or another; or are hiding from some one. We will go and keep them company."

"Perhaps they would object to us."

"No; I think not."

"You are too conceited."

"Not I. Company under such circumstances, and in such a place, must always be agreeable."

"Well, be it so," said the second speaker. "Let us, in the first place, carry up the two remaining casks, and then we will go and try our luck."

The speakers then moved away—a door closed behind them, and all was still.

The Senora Mion rose from her stooping posture, and returning to her seat, informed her fellow-captives of what she had heard.

Viva was terrified—Enriqueta was pleased.

"I am afraid Conrad has led us into danger, instead of rescuing us from it," cried Viva. "Who can these strangers be but some of a lawless band?"

"They do not appear so from their conversation," said the Senora Mion, "they seem quiet men, although their occupation no doubt is rather doubtful. Let us wait patiently."

As she spoke there was a dull noise as of some one walking behind the wall where the glass stood.

Then the wall shook somewhat violently.

"Conrad was mistaken," said the Senora Mion, "there are two doors to this room, though where the second can be I cannot conceive."

Again the sound.

The women trembled. There seemed something strange and supernatural about the whole affair.

The strong-minded Enriqueta, the Senora Mion, and even the gentle Viva, whose bosom was palpitating with fear, grasped the pistols which Conrad had given them for defence.

Again the wall shook, as if some one were pushing or endeavouring to push it down.

It was evidently but a thin partition of sheet iron.

The third shake had the required effect.

A panel seemed to open in the wall, the glass slid into a grooved channel, and a door opened.

Two men appeared.

"Fear nothing," said the foremost, as he gazed at the trembling women, "fear nothing, we are friends."

(To be continued.)

A RURAL TRAGEDY IN FRANCE.

TRAVELLERS by rail to Tours and the south-western provinces of France will have noticed, in passing through the department of Loir-et-Cher, a singular-looking country. It is a flat table-land, covered to a great extent with pools and marshes, and in some parts with little rocky elevations resembling good-sized mole-hills more than anything else. The little rocks, indeed, are hollow; but, instead of moles, they contain human beings, who, in default of better quarters, have taken up their habitations therein. An entire village, called Roche-Cordon, is made up of such holes in the ground, the orifices consisting sometimes of rough planks, sometimes of stone, and sometimes of simple mud. In the midst of all these dwellings of wretchedness and desolation there arise splendid mansions and palaces, surrounded by parks and flower-gardens, and adorned with all the luxury and taste of modern elegance.

Not many miles from Roche-Cordon stands the Château of Chambord, the Versailles of Touraine, which some time ago was purchased by the ancient aristocracy of France, and presented as a birthday present to Henry V. The law which prevents the elder and younger Bourbons from holding property in the empire was set at naught on this occasion, for the public tribunals confirmed the conveyance of the estate to the Comte de Chambord. High on the central tower of the château there glitters now, as of old, the *fleur-de-lis* of the Bourbons—a massive lily, hewn in stone, some six feet high. The 450 chambers which the mansion contains are kept in admirable order, prepared at any moment to receive the descendant of a hundred kings. Not very distant from the human mole-hills is another magnificent domain, the Château of Valençy. Here lived, died, and was buried, the greatest of modern French diplomatists, Charles Maurice, Prince de Talleyrand, *le beau-frère du diable*, according to a distinguished theologian and writer of sermons.

There are many more his orical and far-famed residences in sight of the mud-holes of Roche-Cordon. There is Plessis-la-Tours, the castellated den of Louis XI., made famous to English readers by "Quentin Durward;" and there is, not far off, La Rabaterie, the whitish residence of Olivier-le-Daim, barber, valet, prime minister to the pious sovereign of France. Many more châteaux, castles, and palaces, among them the splendid park and mansion of St. Aignan, adorn the neighbourhood of the human mole-hills; but all their magnificence scarcely relieves the country from the aspect of utter dearthness and poverty which it presents. To judge by its outer aspects it is still a

fifteenth century land of feudal barons and earth-bound "villains," untouched as yet by the leaven of the *tiers-état* which grew up in the flames and ashes of three revolutions.

The great natural produce of the department of Loir-et-Cher are sheep, kept to the number of half a million, and superintended by about a thousand shepherdesses. These fair ones, on close inspection, are found to be no poetical beings, such as Shenstone delighted to portray, but stout, strapping damsels, with horny hands, leather leggings, and wooden shoes. However, there are exceptions to this general portrait of the sex, and two such exceptions—fair girls, with blue eyes and glossy ringlets—lived latterly in the little village of Meheurs, a few miles from the Château of St. Aignan. The two shepherdesses, Louise Rousseau and Françoise Laurier by name, used to drive their flocks together on the plains, willing away their time by repeating to each other stories of elves and witches, said to arise at midnight from the damp lagoons, dancing around jack-o'-lanterns, and mocking the poor mortals who live in holes in the ground.

Full of such fairy tales was the brother of Louise Rousseau, Denis, an ill-informed little hunchback, with monstrous head and wonderful thin legs, himself resembling one of the supposed demons of the marshes. Denis Rousseau frequently went with his sister and her friend into the plains, assisting in tending the sheep, and watching with his keen grey eyes every movement of the fair form of Françoise. The latter seemed scarcely to regard him; yet secretly conscious of her power over the little dwarf, held him under complete control, employing him in errands and the execution of little orders. One day she commanded him to bring her a stout piece of string the next morning, and having done so she sent him on a journey far on the moors, pretending to have lost one of her sheep. That morning Louise Rousseau had come up to the ordinary meeting-place with a new bonnet, bought at the special request of her friend, and which she intended to wear at the forthcoming *fête* of Meheurs. It was a simple enough piece of dress, a few gay ribbons backed to a piece of muslin; but as it was it excited the intense admiration of both the girls. Trying it alternately on each others' heads, they wandered together far into the fields, till at last they came to a piece of moorland overgrown with low brushwood. Here Louise Rousseau sat down to rest, with the bonnet in her lap, entirely lost in the pleasure of looking at it. Suddenly a rope flew round her neck, skillfully thrown by the girl Françoise, and after a few convulsive struggles Louise Rousseau ceased to breathe. The dead body remained for days in the low lagoon, attacked by vultures hovering in the air.

Two days after this event, the 7th of June, 1860, Françoise appeared at the village *fête* in a new bonnet, radiant with delight, and full of smiles for the admirers who thronged around her. Among the latter was the dwarf Denis, who saw at a glance that the bonnet of his lost sister, believed to have been drowned in one of the ponds, was on the head of the murderess. He trembled, he says in his evidence, within himself, divining a foul crime, but had not the courage to confide his thoughts to any one. The next morning he, with another lad, went to the moors to cut wood, when all at once they came to and almost tumbled over the corpse of Louise Rousseau. The dwarf fell to the ground senseless, while the other lad ran back to the village to apprise the people of what he had seen. Soon a number of men arrived, who carried the body of the poor shepherdess to the hut of her parents; and before many hours were over the *juge d'instruction*, the gendarmes from Blois, made his appearance on the spot. A cursory medical examination left no doubt that a cruel murder had been committed, the rope with which she had been strangled being still found on the neck of Louise Rousseau. Whose rope was it? The question was solved at once, for a villager declared positively that he had seen it on the very morning on which Louise disappeared in the hands of her brother Denis. He knew it by a line of black on the one end, caused by its having fallen into tar, as also by a peculiar knot towards the centre.

There seemed no doubt the dwarf had murdered his sister, and he was horribly ugly. He was forthwith taken up, and put in prison, amid the yells of abhorrence of the whole population. Only one young man, a worker in an iron forge, walked thoughtfully behind the throng which followed the dwarf to the door of the gaol, neither shouting nor speaking to any one. It was he who had given a new bonnet to Louise Rousseau at the beginning of June, and he, with his own eyes, had seen the same bonnet on the head of Françoise Laurier on the day of the village *fête*. The crowd having dispersed, he went quietly into the office of the *juge* and told his short tale. An hour after Louise Rousseau found herself in the hands of the gendarmes, and was carried off to the prison of Blois.

The assizes of the department of Loir-et-Cher opened on the 4th of August, amid an immense concourse of spectators. For weeks the whole province had talked of nothing but the murder of Louise Rousseau, and

many were the speculations set afloat upon the subject. The majority inclined to think Denis guilty of the murder—he was such an ugly little dwarf, always hazing on moors and in out-of-the-way places, and evidently in secret communion with demons and hobgoblins. Françoise Laurier, on the other hand, was known to be a most sweet-tempered girl, always laughing and playing, and evidently quite unfit to commit a foul deed of assassinating a friend and companion. So the assizes opened, and examination and cross-examination of accused and witnesses commenced.

At first all went in favour of Françoise; she confessed having received the fatal bonnet as a gift from the dwarf, but utterly denied all complicity in the assassination. The evidently favourable impression which this statement made upon judge and jury induced Françoise to go a step further; she said she had seen Dennis murder his sister—seen it from a distance. Pressed very hard now she acknowledged having helped the dwarf to tie the hands of his sister but only after he had committed the fatal act, life being then nearly extinct. So she lost herself in a maze of assertions and counter-assertions in which before long she was hopelessly entangled. She all but confessed having committed the murder, repeating, however, with great vehemence, that the crime had taken place under the influence and instigation of Denis. Then the little dwarf was interrogated, and in simple, unaffected language he told the whole story of the last few months; how he had been made to bring the fatal rope; how he had been sent away immediately after; how he had seen his sister's bonnet on the head of Françoise; and how terror had overcome fraternal feeling. The word "love" he did not pronounce; but the feeling was too transparent to escape observation. The *vox populi*, in the shape of the twelve stout men in the jury-box, evidently now got some dim insight into the real state of affairs, and, at their request, Françoise was put under examination once more, and was gradually brought to admit that she herself had thrown the rope round the neck of her friend, but in mere playfulness, and that the string having become entangled, Louise Rousseau had been killed by her own efforts to disentangle herself. After this confession the judge thought further examination useless; but the twelve men of the jury had evidently become more bewildered than ever. Was not the dwarf so ugly, and Françoise Laurier so good-looking; and was it not possible, after all, that the pretty shepherdess had killed her dear friend by accident, and taken the bonnet in mere despair of soul? Thus communing with themselves, the men of the jury were locked up to think over the matter at their leisure.

After long deliberation they came forth again into court, announcing, amid the deep silence of the multitude, that Françoise Laurier had been found guilty of the murder of Louise Rousseau, but without premeditation, and "under extenuating circumstances." What these circumstances were the twelve men of the jury kept to themselves. Thereupon the judge expressed himself to the effect that he fully concurred in the verdict, and sentenced Françoise Laurier to fifteen years' penal servitude. The dwarf, at the same time, was ordered to be discharged from custody, the innocent having for once been saved by the French mode of interrogation.

UPON the departure of the royal mail steam-ship Shannon from St. Thomas, a rumour had reached that place that the Alabama had engaged and sunk the Federal war-steamer Vanderbilt off Havana.

THERE is to be, on the 15th of October, a *fête* in honour of the inauguration of a new statue of the great Napoleon in his coronation robes, which is to replace the present one upon the column of the Place Vendôme.

A NUMBER of scientific gentlemen attended recently at the proving-house of Lloyd's Committee, in the New Road, Poplar, for the purpose of witnessing the mode of testing the strength of chain cables and anchors designed by Mr. T. M. Gladstone, C.E.

NEWS has been received at Warsaw that General Mouravieff had all young men in Wilna with light hair arrested, and two of their number hanged, because the executors of the sentence of death passed by the National Government upon the marshal of the nobility, Domejko, also happened to be light-haired persons.

A LETTER from Riga, in the *Magdeburg Gazette*, states that Madlle. Sianianoff, a young Polish lady, twenty years of age, has just died near Dubein, in consequence of a flogging with the knout, inflicted by the orders of Mouravieff, because she wore mourning. All the Poles and Germans staying at Dubein attended the funeral of this unfortunate lady.

THE intelligence brought by the overland mail seems to throw some doubt on the identity of the person supposed to be the infamous Nana Sahib. With him was captured a blind Brahmin, who turned Queen's evidence, and denounced his fellow-prisoner as the monster of Bithoor. There need be no surprise if, after all, we have trapped the wrong man.

WHITE FEATHER.

AN INDIAN TALE.

CHAPTER I.

BLACK WOLF AT THE LODGE OF ENOSHO.

It has been but a few years since that portion of the State of Ohio, known as the "Western Reserve," was a wilderness, inhabited only by Indians and wild beasts peculiar to the country.

The first emigration to the Reserve, with a view to forming a settlement, was in the autumn of 1796. Previous to this time, however, as early as 1786, a noted missionary, by the name of Ziesberger, with a few followers—all good and brave men—left Detroit, Michigan, and in a small sail-vessel, called Mackinaw, started down the shore of the lake. After a tedious voyage they landed at the mouth of the Cuyahoga river, the present site of the beautiful city of Cleveland.

Ziesberger and his companions then proceeded eleven miles up the river, to an old, deserted Ottawa village, to which they gave the name of Pillgrimage—Pilgrim's Rest—and where they remained until the April following.

Toward evening of a pleasant afternoon—the day preceding their departure—nearly two miles above the Ottawa village, and directly on the eastern bank of the Cuyahoga, was an Indian. He lay close on the ground by the side of a log, his head extended beyond and looking round the end. A rifle was grasped firmly in his right hand, and an expression of stern displeasure rested upon his swarthy features.

On the opposite bank, perhaps fifty rods below, yet in full view of the savage, was an Indian maiden and a white man.

She was a dark-eyed beauty, perfect in form, symmetrical in feature, agile as a panther, and keen as a fox. Attired in the antique costume of her people, she exhibited at a glance all the exquisite loveliness of her full, rounded person. Her name was White Feather—an appellation significant from the unusually pure whiteness of her complexion—and she was the daughter of Walking Bear, a once noted sachem of the Seneca tribe, but who had long since gone to the spirit hunting-grounds of his ancestors. He had but one child, and at his death she was left with his squaw, an old, infirm Indian woman.

The white man was about twenty-five years of age; well-formed and handsome, and held a fine finished rifle. He possessed an accomplished education; was the only son of wealthy parents living in Hartford, Connecticut, and having an ardent desire for an adventure in the Great Western Wilderness—as the North Western Territory was then called—he came on to Detroit with a few emigrants, intending to remain one or two years, then return. He was soon attached to the company under the leadership of Ziesberger, and with them came to the old Ottawa village on the Cuyahoga. Here he met the Indian maiden, and a warm attachment sprang up between them. His name was Dennis Rodman.

White Feather had just risen from the moss-covered knoll on which she was sitting when he approached, and the quick flush of joy with which she greeted him, gave place instantly to a pale cheek, a quivering lip, and downcast gaze. She spoke:

"Enosho"—the name of her mother—"tells me the pale face is going to leave his forest home. What will become of his promises to White Feather? Will he leave her to wither and die as a tree with a fire built around its roots?"

"No, indeed!" he answered quickly, leaning his rifle against a tree, and taking her hand which she did not withdraw. "I shall not leave you. You will go with me. I have just seen your mother. She says it would quite break her heart to part with you, yet if you wished to go, she would not oppose you."

"White Feather could leave her tribe for the pale face, but not her mother." She it was who gave me life; showed me all the beauties of earth, and the wonders of heaven. She taught me to embroider the moccasins; to cull the sweetest flowers, and to shoot with the bow and arrow. White Feather loves her mother, and could not leave her.

"She can go with us," he said, encouragingly. "She shall have a home with me while she lives, and I will be kind to her for your sake."

"If the pale-face should dig around the roots of a full-grown tree standing in the deep forest, and transplant it in a big field alone, with nothing of its kind to shade and protect it, would it live? The sapling might be dug around and moved to another clime, yet live. It would wilt, the leaves would droop, and for a year it would struggle in the new soil, but with care it would thrive and even blossom in the strange land. Does the pale-face understand?"

"Yes," he replied, "your meaning is plain; but come, let us go and talk with your mother."

"White Feather is ready," was the laconic reply,

and placing her arm in his, he took up his rifle and they walked away together.

She, with all the frank, open confidence of her warm, guileless nature, had given her heart freely to the young man, loving him devotedly; while he, pure in thought and motive, had conceived the romantic idea of taking an Indian bride to his distant home. He was sincere in his purpose, entertaining a zealous affection for the forest beauty.

Arm in arm—she leaning fondly towards him, and he looking tenderly down into her face—they walked on, the dry leaves rustling beneath their feet. They did not observe the savage, who had been lying behind the log, but who was now stealthily following them.

Nearly a mile from the river, by the side of a little brook in the thick woods, stood a lone hut—the home of Enosho, the widow of Walking Bear. It was evening, when the lovers reached the isolated dwelling, and they were warmly welcomed by the old squaw, who stood in the door to receive them.

Twilight passed, and the thick shades of a cloudy night had settled through the dense forest, still young Rodman tarried at the lodge. He had pleaded his case fervently. The mother was pleased with him, and willing her child should become his squaw, but she could not endure the thought of having her leave the tribe.

White Feather joined with her lover to have her mother accompany them to the great cities of the white men, but she shook her head negatively, preferring to remain with her own people, and be buried by the side of her husband.

During this entire interview, the savage who had followed from the river, lay outside the hut, peering through a crevice in the logs and listening attentively.

It was not far from ten o'clock when Rodman arose to leave the lodge. He had promised to call the next day and arrange the final settlement for the marriage. White Feather followed him from the hut, and walked on by his side down to the little brook, Enosho sitting in the door smoking her pipe. It was intensely dark, and the lovers paused by the stream, the rippling water running along at their feet. For a few moments they were engaged in earnest conversation; then, with a fervent "good-night," they parted. She turned toward the hut; he moved away in the direction of the old Ottawa village.

White Feather took two or three steps, then stopped, turned back and listened. She stood in this attitude until his receding footsteps were lost in the distance, then turning again toward her home, she walked on slowly. That instant she detected the form of an Indian gliding noiselessly from the path before her, but without speaking she reached the lodge.

She had only just passed the threshold, when a tall, athletic Indian, in the full vigour of manhood, stood in the doorway. White Feather started as she discovered who it was, and a suspicion of evil flashed upon her mind. The impression was quickly confirmed by the lowering frown and knit brow of the savage; yet, without appearing to notice the foreboding expressions, she said:

"Black Wolf is welcome to the lodge of Enosho."

His lip curled; his eye flashed, and his fingers worked nervously around the barrel of his rifle. His voice was bitter with passion:

"The young squaw speaks in riddles. The white man has turned her head. She has two tongues. One for Black Wolf, another for the thieving pale-face. Black Wolf has heard and seen. The daughter of Walking Bear is false to her tribe, and would sell herself to her enemies."

White Feather retorted indignantly:

"Black Wolf has stolen into the lodge of friends to abuse their hospitality. His words are like the bite of a serpent. White Feather cares not for his scorn or his smile!" and she turned away coldly.

Enosho laid down her pipe deliberately, and spoke:

"What is this quarrel? Has my child promised that which she has not fulfilled?"

"No, mother!" interrupted White Feather, quickly. "Black Wolf has no promise. He has asked me to become his wife, but I could not consent, and so told him. He should learn to bridle his tongue, and cover the evil of his heart, if he would win a maiden for his bride."

"The young squaw is heated with passion at the oily words of the pale-face," rejoined the savage, insultingly. "She has forgotten her own people, and would give herself to the usurpers."

"Silence, Black Wolf!" Enosho exclaimed, drawing herself up to her full height, and speaking as one having authority. "The daughter of Walking Bear has a right to bestow her hand as she wishes. Let not Black Wolf forget himself in the home of his people. He will speak with respect, or leave the lodge."

A short pause followed this abrupt and pointed speech, then the Indian replied:

"The wolves and ravens shall feed upon the carcass of the pale-face. If White Feather will not be my squaw, the white man shall not possess her. Black

Wolf has spoken;" and turning short he left the lodge.

CHAPTER II.

A NIGHT'S ADVENTURE IN THE WOODS.

DENNIS RODMAN, after leaving White Feather, pushed on as rapidly as the circumstances of his situation would admit. Not the nearest object could he see; not even his own hand when held within an inch of his face.

He was liable any moment to walk abruptly against a tree; to become entangled in low bushes; to fall at full length over an old log, or pitch head foremost into a dry tree-top. He had nothing but the bare sense of feeling with which to guide his footsteps, and it was necessary to proceed with great caution. He guarded his rifle as best he could, and pressed on toward the old Ottawa village.

The owls hooted, the wolves howled, and occasionally the fierce screech of the panther was heard. As a flash, the danger of his situation was impressed upon his mind. While at the lodge of Enosho, he was wholly occupied with thoughts of White Feather, forming plans for the future. He never once considered that there would be perils in his way to the old village, and it was not until he felt a sense of bewilderment, that he awoke to a full realization of the hazard of his undertaking.

Suddenly, he came to the conviction that he was pursuing the wrong course—that the village lay in an altogether different direction. He paused, wiped the perspiration from his brow, and made an effort to recover his usual presence of mind, which had become suddenly much deranged. The more he thought, the more he became convinced of his error, and finally turned off to the left. On, on he went, feeling his way through the dark, lonely woods, but no light struck upon his vision—no village could he discover.

Fully impressed with the certainty that instead of nearing the place he desired, he was proceeding farther and farther into the deep forest, he paused again. What could he do? How could he extricate himself? There was but one course suggested itself to his mind. If he made any further attempt to reach the village, he would only become more involved in the labyrinths of the wilderness, and probably be farther from his friends at daylight than if he remained in his present position. He would stay where he was. He had no fire, or anything with which to kindle one, and to add still more to his discomfiture, it rained heavily.

If he hallooed it would be a signal for the wolves to approach, and he would soon be surrounded by a swarm of half-starved animals, ferocious with hunger. If he discharged his gun it would only increase his danger, for it would be almost impossible to reload in the rain and darkness with any degree of certainty against a time of necessity.

While thus meditating, he heard a light tread on the leaves near him. He glanced quickly in the direction, but could see nothing. The steady dropping of water was all he could hear. If he had been closely blindfolded, his organs of sight would not have been of less value to him in the intense darkness.

The thought flashed upon his mind, that what he had heard was a wolf, and he listened a moment, expecting to hear the signal howl which would bring the whole pack to the scene. That instant he heard the tread again, but in a different direction.

He was naturally courageous; scarcely knew what it was to fear man or beast, yet there was something in his present condition that depressed him painfully. If he could have seen what was passing around him, and made preparations to defeat any impending attack, it would have been different; but to stand and feel that an unseen foe might spring upon him was anything but pleasant, and if he trembled slightly, his grip tightening on the barrel of his rifle, it would not be considered unnatural.

A hasty deliberation decided his course. He would climb a tree, where he might possibly pass the night in safety; but how was this to be accomplished? How could he select a tree? All he could do would be to feel the size, and trust to luck for limbs on which he could sit till morning. It was a difficult undertaking, yet he moved to make the trial.

He had taken but a few steps when something struck heavily on the ground, apparently not more than twenty feet from him. The movement was followed by three or four bounds, like the leap of an animal, then a scratching on the bark of a tree. The impression made on his mind, was that some beast—a panther, perhaps—had leaped from a tree to the ground, and after a few springs, bounded again upon another tree. He had hardly time to reflect, when his ears were saluted with a piercing shriek that chilled his blood, and involuntarily he stepped back.

He had not yet recovered from the excitement and alarm occasioned by the seeming certainty of the presence of a panther, when there was the mingling howl of a pack of wolves close at hand.

This aroused him, and he started quickly to find a

tree he could climb. Groping around in the dark, he found one which he thought might afford the protection he desired, and lashing his rifle to his belt with his handkerchief, he began to ascend. Fortunately, it proved to be a comfortable retreat. At the height of perhaps twenty feet, was a large limb, shooting out at a right angle with the body, on which he could sit, while a smaller branch just below, gave him a good foothold. If he had had the light of day he could not have chosen a more appropriate place. He noticed, however, that the wolves did not approach near the tree, but kept off at a little distance, howling most dismally.

While congratulating himself on the safety of his position, from the wolves at least, he heard a low, deep purr, like that of a cat. He turned his eye in the direction, but every object was enveloped in gloom, and the rain was falling in torrents.

Again he heard the ominous purr, and again he looked in the direction. This time he saw two fiery eyeballs about on a level with him. They remained stationary, and he was not slow to understand what they were. It was a panther perched upon a tree watching him. His situation was painful. He clutched the limb on which he sat, his heart bounded, and his breath came in fitful gasps. He knew the ferocious animal was waiting its own pleasure to spring upon him and bear him to the ground. The cold sweat started from his brow, and his gaze was fixed steadily on the burning eyes of the beast. He now knew why the wolves kept at such a distance. The presence of the panther kept them in check, but they made the most hideous clamour in their circuit round and round the tree.

If he should descend and attempt to escape, the wolves would attack him at once, even though the panther allowed him to move. It was impossible to shoot with any certainty of aim, and to miss would be a signal for the attack. There was but one alternative: he would face the animal unflinchingly, and hold it in check till daylight, when he might hope to cope more successfully with the formidable adversary.

He held firmly to the limb with his left hand, his feet braced against the branch, and his right hand grasped a long, keen-edged hunting-knife. His rifle was still lashed to his belt. It could be made of no avail in the expected struggle.

Just then a light from a distance flashed in among the trees, and he heard a voice calling him by name. He answered, and the light approached rapidly.

Dennis Rodman's heart renewed its courage as he saw the light and heard the voice, but the panther greeted the movement with a low, menacing growl.

Turning his eye cautiously, the young man saw White Feather bounding forward, waving a flaming torch above her head, and carrying a formidable rifle. Every few steps she would call his name.

The sneaking wolves had ceased their howling, and were skulking away from the light, while the panther's growl grew more deep and threatening.

The intrepid maiden advanced cautiously, the flaming torch of hickory bark throwing a light far out around her.

"White Feather!" exclaimed Rodman, earnestly. "For the love of Heaven come forward quickly! There is a panther on a tree directly before. Come and hold your light so that I may shoot him."

She advanced nearly to the roots of the tree in which her lover had taken refuge; held the torch above her head and peered steadily into the gloom.

"Let the pale-face not move from his position," she said. "White Feather is acquainted with the animal, and will destroy it."

For a moment she swung the torch round her, and then, stopping suddenly, held it as high as she could reach. The bark blazed up afresh and revealed the panther.

A large tree had been torn up by the roots, and just before reaching the ground, the top, having a large fork, came down astride a mammoth oak, and lodged about twenty feet from the ground. On this fallen tree, close by the body of the oak, lay the panther. He was a powerful animal, and not more than thirty feet from young Rodman. He lay crouched on the tree, his nose between his fore paws, and his hind legs drawn up under his body, ready to spring upon his prey. His jaws were parted, the lips contracted in an angry growl, and his red tongue shone between the two rows of sharp, stout teeth, while his tail moved admonishingly, as if displeased with the intrusion. His eye was no longer upon the first object of his interest, but fixed savagely on the light.

The Indian girl comprehended all at a glance. She was within forty feet of the panther, and could see him distinctly.

"Let the pale-face sit as if dead!" she remarked, with perfect composure. "White Feather will shoot him."

She swung the torch again till it burned briskly, then thrust the end she held into a hole in an old tree near where she stood. This accomplished, she crouched by the roots of the tree, resting her rifle against the body,

beneath the light. In this position she took deliberate aim and fired.

For an instant, the panther did not move, then his claws clutched upon the bark, his jaws closed, and with a fearful bound, he went whirling through the air, falling near where the maiden stood. The animal was dead a moment after striking the ground. The ball had pierced his heart.

Dennis Rodman descended quickly, and White Feather was clasped firmly in his embrace.

"How," he asked, "am I indebted for this fortunate interposition in my greatest peril?"

"The pale face was in danger from other enemies than the panther," she answered, looking up into his face. "Black Wolf had sworn that the white man should die. He was at the lodge after the pale face left it. White Feather prepared a torch and tinder, and taking the rifle, followed to warn and protect her friend. He lost his way; she went to the lodges of the pale faces at the old Ottawa village, but he had not arrived. She turned back, and hearing the wolves and panther, replenished her torch, and found him she sought. Is the pale face satisfied?"

She was again pressed to his heart, and he imprinted a warm kiss on her brow.

That instant, a sharp report broke the scene and a ball whistled past the young man's head, cutting the flesh slightly upon his cheek.

"Fly from the light!" cried White Feather quickly. "Black Wolf is upon the war path, and seeks the blood of the pale face."

The words were scarcely pronounced when the Indian, with a fierce yell of mingling hate and revenge, rushed forward frantically, brandishing his knife and tomahawk in the most fearful manner.

White Feather fell stunned by a blow from the hatchet, but her companion was better prepared to receive the savage, whose murderous knife was turned aside, and they closed in mortal combat.

The torch had been thrust into what proved to be an old hollow stub. The fire had communicated to the inside, which was dry, and a dense volume of smoke and flame was issuing from the top and through rents along the side. Thus, for a long distance around the woods were illuminated with a glaring light.

The discharge of firearms, and the presence of fire, had frightened the wolves and they had fallen back, viewing the scene in silence, only an occasional howl being heard; and the near approach of morning, admonishing them of danger, they were quietly dispersing.

The struggle between Dennis Rodman and the Indian, was of short duration. The savage was powerful and more than a match for our hero, but what the youth lacked in strength, he made amply good in quickness of motion, and before his foe could recover from the first rebuff in turning the point of his weapon aside, Rodman had thrust his knife through the heart of the doomed red man, who fell dead at his feet.

The blow White Feather had received was not dangerous, yet it had effected an ugly wound. The hatchet struck the side of her head, and glancing downward, cut a deep gash in her shoulder. The stun occasioned by the concussion lasted but a moment, and as the Indian fell, she having regained her feet, sprang forward, her face and neck besmeared with blood, and asked hurriedly:

"Is the pale-face hurt?"

"No," he replied, extending his arms to meet her. "I am uninjured, and I would to Heaven you had escaped his murderous weapon!"

CHAPTER III.

THE SAVAGES CLAMOROUS FOR BLOOD.

THE sun had advanced half-way up the eastern horizon, on the morning following the incidents of the preceding chapter, when Dennis Rodman left the lodge of Enosho, whither he had accompanied White Feather. Her wounds were not of a serious nature, and after being carefully dressed, discommoded her very little. This fact lightened the heart of the young man, and he sped on swiftly toward the old Ottawa village.

He was considerably troubled, nevertheless, in view of the probable excitement among the savages, when they learned of the tragic death of one of their number; yet he was resolved to give instant information of the whole affair, and throw himself upon the honour with which he had acted—killing his adversary in self-defence.

He was very much surprised, and not a little alarmed on hearing the village, to discover a large body of Indians collected around the hut occupied by Ziesberger. It was plain to be observed that the savages were unusually excited and clamorous with unchecked passion.

The idea flashed upon his mind in an instant, that they were already apprised of the death of Black Wolf, and had come to demand the murderer. He paused to consider what course he had best pursue—to turn back and make his way through the wilderness to Detroit,

and from thence to his home in the east, or walk boldly into their midst and surrender himself, trusting for an amicable settlement of the difficulty.

The latter proposition was one of extreme hazard. He could see that the savages were terribly enraged, and the cause was one they would not pass over lightly. Indeed, he had no reason to doubt but that a summary vengeance would be his immediate fate. To flee, would be to abandon White Feather, and all his plans of future happiness. She had saved him from the panther, and warned him of Black Wolf, even at the peril of her own life. Now, should he forsake her when the first danger appeared? No! he would meet the wrath of the Indians; turn it aside if possible; if not, die like a warrior! Would he be worthy of her, did he exhibit less courage than she? Another thought startled him. If he should succeed in effecting his escape, the savages would take revenge on those who had been his friends—Ziesberger and his companions. With a desperate resolve he threw his rifle over his shoulder, and walked resolutely into the village, directly among the infuriated Indians clamouring for his blood.

Ziesberger and his followers stood huddled together like a flock of frightened sheep, the savages yelling and hooting around them. They were sadly alarmed, fearing they would be massacred by the incensed Indians.

Rodman walked boldly into their midst, making his way directly to his companions. The Indians, with a menacing stare, fell back to let him pass, then closing in, followed up to the excited group of pioneers.

The savages then began rudely examining the young man's clothes and rifle, taking the latter away from him. They then removed his knife—the blade was still wet with the blood of Black Wolf.

At sight of the besmeared knife the Indians sent forth a hideous howl of rage, and began dancing around in a circle, brandishing their weapons in the most frantic manner.

The scene was terrific, Rodman gave himself up as lost, expecting every instant that a hatchet would be buried in his brains, or a knife thrust through his heart.

At this critical moment an old sachem appeared, and speaking to the excited multitude, silence and order were restored. He then demanded the cause of the tumult.

A large, brawny savage, holding the bloody knife, stepped forward and said:

"Black Wolf was my brother. He has been murdered by the pale-face, and his body is food for the wolves. Is the chief satisfied?"

A cloud gathered upon the old sachem's face, and his dark eye swept over the group of terror-stricken white men. He said:

"Let the accused step forth, that we may hear him speak."

Rodman moved out from among his companions, and in a clear, firm tone, related all the particulars of the sad affair, assuring the old chief that he acted only in self-defence, killing the Indian to save his own life.

"The white man speaks lies," thundered the passionate brother. "Black Wolf loved White Feather, and had won her for his bride; the pale-face was jealous of the red man, and—"

The sentence was cut abruptly short by a blow from the fist of the insulted Rodman, who struck the savage between the eyes, sending him sprawling on the ground.

"I have not lied, great chief," he said, turning to the sachem. "I have spoken the truth."

"The white youth is a brave warrior," replied the old Indian, evidently pleased at the daring feat, in the face of such overwhelming opposition. "Let the young squaw be brought, we will hear her speak."

To the surprise of Dennis Rodman, White Feather—her head and shoulder bandaged—accompanied by the aged Enosho, came into the circle and gave their testimony, perfectly corroborating his. He had not observed them in the crowd, supposing they were at their lodge by the little brook, ignorant of his fearful situation.

The old chief listened attentively to every word, then said:

"The white man has broken no faith with his red brothers. Black Wolf sought the quarrel and was beaten. He was an old woman, and should never have gone upon the war path. He should have remained by the lodge to hoe corn and tend the papoose. War Eagle has spoken;" and wrapping his cloak around him, he strode haughtily away.

The effect of those words was wonderful. The savages began to instantly to disperse, and in twenty minutes they had nearly all departed.

It was evening again, and the old Ottawa village appeared deserted; yet in the little log hut occupied by Ziesberger, during his seven months' stay on the banks of the Cuyahoga, was the warm-hearted old missionary and his followers. The day had been one of intense excitement and peril, and the hardy pioneers were fully aroused to the dangers of their situation. They were holding a council to determine what course they ought to pursue in the emergency. The savages had dis-

perched, apparently peaceably, but old Ziesberger was too well acquainted with Indian habits and peculiarities not to know that the brother of Black Wolf would seek a dire revenge, and that he would readily find enough reckless characters to aid him in his diabolical work. White Feather and her mother, having remained at the village—the old squaw being unable from age and infirmities to walk to their lodge—were admitted to the council, and aided materially in arriving at a proper conclusion.

It was decided to proceed at once on board the small sailing vessel in which they had come up the river, and drop down again to the lake, then return to Detroit.

Enosho and her daughter consented to accompany them. The old squaw lived in the vicinity of Detroit at the time of her husband's death, and in order to die near his grave that her bones might rest with his, readily assented to make the journey.

White Feather was happy in the presence of her pale-faced lover, and joyous at the thought of never parting with him again. She had forgotten that a sleepless enemy was on the track of him she loved, thirsting for his blood in revenge for the death of a brother—an Indian's revenge, that knows no satiety save in the full gratification of its cruel purposes.

When the council closed, and Ziesberger with his friends was about to proceed to the boat, an Indian skulked away from the old hut, and hurried towards the river. A bass-wood log, split open in the centre, the halves lying side by side, extended from the shore to the boat, and across these the savage proceeded rapidly. Casting a quick glance around, he descended through a scuttle-hole and hid himself among some old rubbish below the deck.

Not more than an hour was employed in transferring the "traps" from the huts to the vessel, then the party being all on board, the boat moved leisurely down stream. It was bright starlight, and the shores could be seen plainly, rendering it easy to keep the vessel in the centre of the channel.

The little handful of pioneers felt much relieved in the prospect of a successful exit from the dangerous locality, and after arranging for two—a steersman and watch—to remain on duty three hours, then to be relieved by others, the party "turned in" to rest.

Two hours passed and a deep silence rested upon the scene. The man stationed at the prow as a lookout was fast asleep. Dennis Rodman had the helm, and he was not asleep, but seated by the side of White Feather, engaged in a whispered conversation. He managed to keep the boat straight in the channel, yet his mind was not on his duty. The lovely maiden at his side occupied every thought, and he did not see a dark painted face peering up from the scuttle-hole.

Gradually the face advanced till the shoulders appeared. Then one brawny arm, the hand holding a huge knife, was raised above the opening; and directly, the tall figure of an Indian stood on the deck.

Rodman and White Feather sat with their backs to the savage, who saw his advantage, and crept toward them with the stealthiness of a cat.

This was a fearful moment for the lovers, but all unconscious of their peril, they sat, his arm around her waist, listening to the recital of one of her adventures in the great wilderness.

The Indian's whole attention was upon the object of his hate—the slayer of his brother—and he did not observe old Enosho crawling up through the opening directly behind him. She seemed to have renewed her strength, and with all the native shrewdness of her people, she advanced rapidly upon the savage.

He stood within ten feet of his victim. His grip tightened upon the hilt of his knife; his form towered aloft, and then he leaped forward in preparation for the fatal spring. Then, with a rapid motion, Enosho drew a hatchet from her girdle, whirled it above her head, and the edge came down on the assassin's right arm, breaking the bones, and causing his knife to fall from his grasp.

This startled the lovers, and they sprang to their feet, turning quickly upon the scene. For one instant the savage paused, then sprung forward to grapple his foe and bear him into the water. That instant, however, was sufficient to thwart his purpose, for as he came forward, Rodman dropped on the deck, and catching the Indian by the legs, buried him into the river. It was never known whether he reached the shore or perished in the water.

Enosho had exerted herself to the utmost to accomplish her purpose, and the task overpowered her. She sank senseless on the floor, and in an hour was dead, having ruptured a blood-vessel. She was taken to Detroit, and White Feather pointing out the grave of her father, the old squaw was buried by his side. Dennis and the maiden were then married, and she started with her to his home in the east. They reached there in due time, and a year afterward, if a stranger visited Dennis Rodman at his princely residence in Hartford, he would not have recognised in the graceful, accomplished mistress of the mansion, the brave, noble Indian maiden of the Senecas—White Feather.

M. J. H.

CATHERINE RASHLEIGH'S TEMPTATION.

CHAPTER I.

To-night she will dance at the palace,
With the diamonds in her hair;
And the Prince will praise her beauty—
The loveliest lady there.

"CHOOSE, Catherine—choose between me and Roy Clifford. Which will you be—poor or rich, bond or free?"

It was in a pause of the dance that this momentous question fell on Catherine Rashleigh's ear. They stood in the conservatory of his palace home, where a soft light fell on

Rare flowers—narcissus, lilies, each crowned,
Red oleander blossoms, hyacinths,
Shedding faint fragrance richly curled all round,
Corinthian, cool, columbar flowers on pinthra;
Warm carnations, white and crimson ones,
And amber lilies, and the regal rose,
Which for the breast of queens full scornful grow.

Beyond, on one hand, might be seen the ball-room, with its frescoed walls, its stuted pillars, its tessellated floor, while on the other stretched parlours, library, and dining-room in splendid perspective. Then there arose before Catherine a vision of the fairy-like grounds, through which she had been roaming with her host, and the exterior of the mansion, which was a superb specimen of Moresque architecture, and with its central dome, its minarets, its vine-wreathed lattices, its dim, cool galleries, and verandas draped with some gorgeous Indian creeper, seemed like those the Turkish Sultan erects along the banks of the "Golden Horn." She admired John Vershire's princely home, and now, in striking contrast to the splendour about her, there swept across her brain memories of the third-rate tenement, in which the Rashleighs had been obliged to live since her father's death. The worn carpets, the scant and faded curtains, the furniture polished and repolished by the single housemaid; the remodelling of old garments for the younger children; the sacrifices necessary to equip herself for a ball or party; her mother's manoeuvring for a seat in Mrs. Hollister's opera-box—all their struggles to keep up appearances till she should be settled in life were recalled in that decisive hour. She remembered, too, how surprised and pleased Mrs. Rashleigh had been when Catherine had attracted the attention of John Vershire, how she had exhibited the bouquets brought by his footman, and with what fond pride she had arrayed her for this fête.

"Catherine," her mother had said, as she folded the shawl around her daughter's superb form, "if John Vershire proposes to you to-night, I hope you will let no silly fancies influence your reply. Roy Clifford can never be more than a friend to you, unless you mean to doom us all to poverty. Remember our destiny is in your hands, child, and be wise."

Was it strange that, under these circumstances, the young girl should have been strongly tempted to give up the one sweet dream of her life? No, no; she was but human, and she was about to give an affirmative answer, when she started, and grew faint and sick at heart.

Mr. Vershire had been slowly leading her through the conservatory, and they had paused near a Bengal rose-tree. It was full of buds and bloom—just such bloom as had flushed one which Roy Clifford had given her last New Year's Day. At sight of this, John Vershire's fabulous wealth vanished. She saw only the quiet home of the Cliffords, the quiet figure of Roy's mother, and the refinement which lent a charm even to the humblest surroundings. True, he was poor in houses, in lands, but rich in truth, honour, and intellect. He was in the second year of his law studies, and Catherine knew that his wife must learn to wait and hope. Amid the world's great field of battle, theirs would, she doubted not, be for awhile, at least, a rugged path, but the sweetest hopes of her young womanhood were centered in him. Tried and tempted as she was, his love came back now as it had dawned upon the horizon of her life, rosy with the morning flush, golden with the promise of the coming day. Her thoughts were wandering on in wild confusion, when her host's voice broke in upon her reverie:

"Well, Catherine," said he, "how have you decided?" In love, John Vershire proved himself as shrewd as in the business by which he had accumulated a fortune of half a million. While Catherine had been pondering his proposal, he had read her face like an open book. Her feverish flush, her restless, but kindling eyes, her quick breathing, told him, as plainly as words could have spoken, when he had gained an advantage; while her sudden start and shiver at the sight of the Bengal roses, her silence, her painful abstraction assured him that Roy Clifford's star was once more in the ascendant. He resolved to break the spell, and as he inquired to what decision she had come, he adroitly drew her from the memory-haunted rose-bush, and stopping in front of a mirror which reflected her at full length, exclaimed:

"Catherine, my love, a queen might be proud of your beauty and grace—will you drag on penurious and obscure, or will you shine in the first circles of the metropolis, and at court? Be mine, and every luxury shall be yours—your word shall be law, your lightest wish anticipated. I will robe you in velvet, and braid your dark hair with diamonds!"

Again Catherine thought of her mother's faded cheek and anxious eye, of the struggles incident to their lot, and she strove to banish Roy Clifford's tall figure, his handsome face, with its firm, proud lip, its clear, dark, steadfast eyes, and the broad, calm brow shaded by waves of chestnut hair. She looked up at John Vershire, a man who had already counted sixty years, and no Adonis in form or feature, but not till she had withdrawn her gaze from the burly figure, the keen, grey eyes, the shaggy brows, and bushy, grey hair, could she summon strength to say:

"Mr. Vershire, I may have my faults and my follies, but I must be true to myself and to you. You know I have been deeply interested in Roy Clifford—I do not love you as I love him. But if you will take me as I am, hoping nothing from our union which you cannot receive, I will be yours. I believe I could be a faithful wife to you—is that all you ask?"

"Yes, yes. I am an old man; it would be absurd in me to talk to you like young Roy Clifford. But"—and he laid his gloved hand softly on her hair—"I love you in my own fashion. I can make you happy, I am certain."

He paused an instant, and then resumed: "When I was in Paris, last spring, I bought a ring of real Florentine workmanship. Cellini himself could not have wrought it more exquisitely, and look, it blazes with diamonds which Eugénie might be proud to wear. I purchased it with the idea of making it a betrothal ring. I have kept it till now, and here it is."

As he spoke he drew from his pocket a tiny casket, and opening it, disclosed the ring. As he placed it on her finger, Catherine again grew giddy, for it seemed like a fetter shutting out Roy Clifford from her very thoughts, and solemnly binding her to John Vershire.

The hour succeeding, her strange betrothal passed like a confused dream. She had a dim recollection of strolling through the princely halls on his arm, and being presented to some of his friends as his affianced wife. It must have been long past midnight when she stole out into the grounds alone, and pausing by a fountain from whose waters a sculptured Undine was rising in her white, still beauty, bathed her heated brow. While she stood there, a shadow fell across the mosaic pavement that encircled the fountain, and a voice low and musical, but with a vein of pathos trembling through it, exclaimed:

"Catherine, Catherine Rashleigh, I could not come till late. Was it to trample my heart beneath his feet that our host invited the poor student? Is what I hear true—have you sold yourself for John Vershire's gold?"

Catherine's brain whirled; her lips parted spasmodically, but she could not articulate a syllable—before the majesty of the young man's scorn the wretched girl was dumb.

"Speak," he continued, "speak—I have a right to know the truth!"

"I will tell you the whole truth, Roy. I love you as I shall never love again, but henceforth it will be sin for me to acknowledge it—I am Mr. Vershire's betrothed wife!" And she held up the slender white hand, blazing with the diamond circlet which had been his gift an hour previous.

A bitter smile curled Roy Clifford's firm, well-cut lip, as he rejoined:

"Catherine, you have weighed my love in the balance with John Vershire's half-million, and gold has turned the scale! This—is this woman's love—woman's faith—ha, ha!" and with that hoarse laugh he left her.

For a few moments Catherine Rashleigh stood there, as white and still as the sculptured Undine, then Clifford's footstep again sounded on the broad gravelled walk leading to the fountain, and she abandoned herself to a passion of tears. Once more he was beside her, his breath was warm upon her cheek, and his hand clasped hers as of old.

"You have begged my life, Catherine," he murmured; "but I cannot part with you in anger. God forgive and pity you, for you will need pity. I am sure. Mark my words—the splendour which dazzles you now will pall upon you—your palace of a house will seem like a prison, and

"Of in your marble hearth's bright glow
You will watch a picture come and go;

a picture of a little parlour where you used to sit with me and my mother, singing to the low tinkle of your guitar, or listening while I read. Then—then, dear Catherine, Heaven help and keep you!"

He gave her one long, steadfast, yearning gaze, pressed a hurried kiss upon her brow, and left the spot. "Catherine, Catherine!" called Mr. Vershire, and the girl shuddered, as she replied:

"Here I am." "Your chaperon's carriage has been waiting for

some time, and Mrs. Hollister is quite impatient, so I suppose I must conduct you back. I hope the day is not far distant when you will be all my own."

Catherine made no answer, and though the keen-sighted John Vershire saw her paleness and agitation, he was thoughtful enough not to allude to that. With the utmost gallantry he showed his beautiful betrothed, and handed her into the carriage with Mrs. Hollister, hitherto the only rich and fashionable friend the Rashleighs could have shown on their visiting list. The host had whispered the tidings of his betrothal to Catherine's chaperon, and the magic of John Vershire's gold had begun to work upon her worldly nature. She was neither languid nor snappish as they drove homeward, but radiant with smiles, and lavish of congratulations.

"My dear," she said, blandly, "my brightest hopes with regard to you are realized. You could not have made a more brilliant match; Mr. Vershire is worth at least half a million."

Mechanically the girl thanked her for her kindly interest and good-wishes, and as she stood on the steps of that third-rate tenement, she muttered:

"Well, this is the last time I shall be obliged to drive to parties in a hackney-coach, or Mrs. Hollister's carriage—Mr. Vershire's equipage is superb!"

The next instant the drowsy housemaid had answered her summons, and she hastened through the narrow hall, and up the staircase to her own room. She was sitting before her toilette-glass, and dreamily unbinding her heavy hair, when her mother entered. There sat Catherine, with a perfectly colourless face, save where a small crimson spot burned on one cheek; eyes whose haunting sadness would have thrilled Roy Clifford with compassion; compressed lips, and those restless fingers threading the mazes of her shining hair.

"Are you ill, Catherine?" asked Mrs. Rashleigh.

"No, mamma, but weary—wearily in body and in soul."

"What has happened?"

"Nothing—nothing to alarm you," and she gave a short, nervous laugh; "only I am engaged to Mr. Vershire!"

"Engaged to John Vershire! Do I hear aright, or am I dreaming?"

"No, no, 'tis no dream—there is the betrothal ring; he will be here to-morrow to ask your sanction."

"Oh, Catherine, if this be true, you ought to be a happy girl to-night; you have saved your mother and your brothers and sisters from want, and consequently from degradation. You have lifted my burden of care at once and for ever."

"I am thankful that my sacrifice has not been in vain, but, oh, mother, my heart is beggared!"

"Do not talk thus; it was but a girlish fancy you had for Roy Clifford; you will forget him, and be happier with Mr. Vershire, for though he is not young, he is well-educated, and most agreeable company. I hope if he comes here in the morning you will meet him, not only with the courtesy due to a man of his rank and wealth, but to one who will soon be your husband."

"Do not fear for me—to-night let me pass the hours as best suits me. To-morrow I shall bid farewell to the old life, with its hopes and dream, and be the mere automaton I shall become when I am John Vershire's wife."

"Automaton!" echoed the worldly mother: "how singularly you speak of your good fortune! Mr. Vershire is a perfect Cressus!"

"Yes, yes, I have sold myself for half a million. And now leave me—I must be alone."

"Good-night, or rather I should say good morning, for it is past two; you will think better of the match that seems so hateful when you are rested."

A low moan, a wild glitter which shot up from the depths of the dark eyes answered Mrs. Rashleigh, and they parted—the mother to dream of the palace-home where her daughter would queen it, and the splendour in which she should again bask, while Catherine held a painful tryst with memory, and struggled to bury the love which had shed its bloom and fragrance through her heart, and write upon its tomb the solemn inscription—"Requiescat in pace."

CHAPTER II.

Are you happy? You look so.

Well, I wish you what you seem.

Happy persons sleep so light!

In your sleep you never dream?

But who would care to know

What dreams you dreamed last night?

AFTER that wearisome night, during which Catherine Rashleigh seemed to have lived ages, she played her part with such skill that even her mother could find no fault with her appearance. When John Vershire called the next morning she received him most graciously, consented to a short engagement, and entered into the preparations for the bridal with an interest which pleased her betrothed, and gratified Mrs. Rashleigh. She wore the flowers Mr. Vershire sent her, read the

books he liked, and sang his favourite songs. The flush on her cheek was more brilliant, her eyes were more lustrous, and the smile on her red, ripe lips more frequent, but since her betrothal she had grown "ice cold and marble calm." There was no heart in her look, her smile, or her laugh, and a close observer would have been shocked at the change that had come over the beautiful Catherine. She had never seen Roy Clifford since they parted by the marble Undine in Mr. Vershire's grounds, and she hoped this pain might be spared her.

One night she sat in John Vershire's opera-box listening to the music which swelled and died around her, and abstractedly watching the stage. She wore a heavy wine-coloured silk, trimmed with black lace, a white opera-cloak, lined with a softer shade of the same warm hue as her robe, and a comb, brooch, bracelets and earrings of Etruscan gold, set with jewels, which glowed blood-red in the gaslight, while her bouquet-holder was crowded with lilies from Vershire's hot-house—some white, some scarlet, some golden, and some royal purple. She was trifling with the blossoms, when, in a pause in the opera, a familiar voice struck upon her ear, and sent the glow from her cheeks. She looked up, and saw Roy Clifford leaning over a lady not far distant. The lady was his cousin, Mrs. Leland, and so intense was her passion for music that she had an opera-box every season. But why had Roy come?—was it to make Catherine's fetters seem more burdensome or to see how she received her lover's attentions? She could not tell, but with a wild effort she controlled her emotion, and grew as gay and brilliant as in her happiest moments; she chatted and laughed as if her love for Roy Clifford had indeed been a dream, a fancy, just rippling the waters of her young heart, and the man at her side had been accepted, not for his half-million, but because of his own sterling excellence.

Roy Clifford soon afterwards left the house, but the next day a boy brought Catherine a package, super-scribed in a handwriting that sent a thrill through every nerve. She took it to her room, and on opening it found a book and a little note. With unsteady fingers she unfolded the paper, and glanced over the following:

"Catherine,—You will not be surprised, I fancy, when I tell you that I can no longer live in England. I am going to Scotland. I shall try to find what it is useless to seek here, where there is so much to remind me of what I have lost—balm, hope, peace. I could not leave you for ever without seeing you once more, and last night I went with cousin Edith to the opera. What I suffered God alone knows. I hope I shall never pass through such an ordeal again, and I trust your pulses did not thrill like mine to the memories of old. If your heart did bleed, it was in secret; you made no sign. All through the hour I remained, that poem of Owen Meredith's haunted me—the poem entitled "Aux Italiens." I send you the book which contains it, and between its leaves I have put the few notes you have written me, three letters, a knot of ribbon, a glove, a few faded flowers—tokens of a love as deep as it is hopeless."

"Read the sad, sweet verses once, and then thrust the volume and the keepsakes out of sight, and never gaze on them more. Good-bye, a long good-bye. God grant that you may never have cause to repent your choice."

"ROY CLIFFORD."

Catherine took up the volume. Her cheek burned, her temples throbbed, her heart beat painfully and slow, as she perused the poem commencing:

At Paris it was, at the opera there,
And she looked like a queen in a book that night,
With the wreath of pearl in her raven hair,
And the brooch on her breast so bright.
Of all the operas Verdi wrote
The best to me is the "Trovatore,"
And Marie could charm with his tenor note
The souls in Purgatory.

The moon on the tower slept soft as snow,
And who was not thrilled in the strangest way,
As we heard him sing while the gas burned low,
"Non ti scorderò di me?"

There, in our front-row box we sat,
Together, my bride-betrothed and I—
My gaze was fixed on my opera-brooch,
And hers on the stage hard by.

Meanwhile I was thinking of my first love,
As I had not been thinking of angst for years,
Till over my eyes there began to move
Something that felt like tears.

I thought of the dress she wore last time,
When we stood 'neath the cypress-tree together,
In that lost land, in that soft clime,
In the crimson evening weather.

I thought of our little quarrels and strife,
And the letter that brought me back my ring,
And it all seemed then, in the waste of life,
Such a very little thing.

And I think in the lives of most women and men,
There's a moment when all would go smooth and even,
If only the dead could find out when
To come back and be forgiven.

The last verses were underlined, and over and over

Catherine Rashleigh read them, till she was well-nigh mad. The whole of the expressive story embodied in the poem touched her as it never had before, and that evening she wrapped herself in her cloak, and hastened down to Mrs. Clifford's humble lodgings. The moonlight streamed into the room as of yore, but the scent of heliotrope, geraniums, and roses was gone, and what was more, neither Roy nor his mother were there.

"Oh, Roy, Roy!" wailed the girl, "would you were here. I cannot have you go and leave me. I am here to-night to tell you that I have read the poem, and it has touched to the very core the heart that has for a time seemed dead within me. I, too, have come back to be forgiven. I will follow you to the world's end. But oh, I fear it is too late!"

On inquiring of the landlady, Catherine learned that her lodgers had left at mid-day, and, as she hurried toward home, she said, hoarsely:

"Fate is against me. I must marry John Vershire!"

A month later her marriage was solemnized with great pomp. No bride ever looked more like a queen than Catherine Rashleigh. The heavy white moire robe, the fabulous splendour of the veil, the diamonds, and, indeed, the whole *trousseau*; the princely gifts of the bridegroom and his friends; the magnificence with which he had fitted up both his country-seat and town-mansion were quite the talk, and created much more than a nine days' wonder. The bride was pronounced the most beautiful of the season, and while ladies envied, gentlemen declared that old John Vershire ought to be worth half a million to carry off such a prize.

After the wedding-breakfast, the bride and bridegroom departed for Paris, where they were to spend their honeymoon, and when they came back to take possession of their palace in town, their return was announced in glowing paragraphs in the evening papers. Mrs. Rashleigh, who now occupied a mansion in a fashionable street hard by her daughter's residence, was in her element. She read the various paragraphs relating to Mr. and Mrs. Vershire, and with a toss of her head, which fluttered the flowers and ribbons of her jaunty cap, said:

"Certainly Catherine is the most fortunate person in the world. I must see her at once. I know she must by this time acknowledge I was right."

The next morning, at as early an hour as Catherine's new habits would allow her to receive calls, Mrs. Rashleigh drove to town. An obsequious servant ushered her into a boudoir, which brought back to Mrs. Rashleigh dreams of the Oriental romances and poems she had read in her youth. The room was octagonal in shape, and the walls entirely concealed by a rich drapery of crimson silk damask, drawn up overhead like those you may have seen in your wanderings in old Moorish palaces, till the apartment seemed like a gorgeous tent, pitched for some royal occupant. Curtains of the same material swept over the plate-glass windows; divans, ottomans, and one great, throne-like chair, all cushioned with crimson velvet; statues that took a warm hue from the bright colouring around them; a writing-desk and table inlaid and covered like the marvels of the East; vases of crystal, lamps, and a thousand graceful trifles in Bohemian, Sevres, silver and gold, made the boudoir appear like the work of an enchanter's wand.

Early as it was, three or four guests had already arrived, and there sat Mrs. Vershire, doing the honours of her regal home. Her morning dress of thick, white silk, faced with crimson, and bordered deep with ermine, the girdle knotted around her waist with careless grace, while its heavy red tassels swept against the gorgeous carpet; the crimson lilies on her breast, and drooping from the bandeaux of her night-black hair—lilies which only the conservatories of the rich could boast; the small feet in their dainty white satin slippers, with their narrow trimming of ermine and bright rosettes, and crossed on a velvet cushion, made up a picture dazzling in the extreme.

"Mrs. Rashleigh, madam," announced the servant, and mother and daughter met for the first time since Catherine had entered on her new life.

The greetings over, Mrs. Rashleigh sat down and watched the bride. How superbly she bore herself. Ah, to have seen her then, nobody would have dreamed she had ever dwelt in a less magnificent home than that of which she was now mistress, and Mrs. Rashleigh felt a fond pride as she gazed at her. When the ladies had gone, she moved forward, and said:

"Well, Catherine—"

A frown gathered on the bride's brow as she interrupted her mother with these thrilling words:

"Do not—do not call me Catherine. It brings back what I would fain forget. Henceforth I am Mrs. Vershire, a mere automaton."

"A beautiful and brilliant automaton, certainly," replied Mrs. Rashleigh. "I cannot tell you how proudly I have watched you to-day. But, my dear, I hoped you would come back to us entirely satisfied with your lot."

"No, no!" exclaimed Mrs. Vershire: "that land of

bloom and beauty has no Lethæan stream, no fountain of immortal youth. I am like a statue, fair enough to look upon, but cold, cold as the winter's snow; and then it seems as if ages had lapsed away. I shall never feel young again."

Other callers were announced, and the conversation was not resumed, but on leaving her daughter, Mrs. Rashleigh recalled her words with vague forebodings of evil.

Time went on, and Mrs. John Vershire rolled along the streets in her sumptuous carriage, wore the costliest fabrics glittered with jewels, and swept through her princely home, looking every inch a queen. So despotism was her way in the gay world, so choice the society she gathered around her, that people who once laughed about the Rashleighs, racked their brains to obtain an invitation to their soirées, and Mrs. Hollister considered herself fortunate to hold a place on her visiting list. But Catherine was all the while treading a path thick with thorns which her own hand had planted; no child's coo echoed soft and dove-like through those luxurious rooms; no little feet learned to patter across the tufted carpets; no tiny fingers wandered over her cheek at nightfall, as the weary head sank upon her breast; no joy blossomed out of the life she led, if I except the pleasure she felt at seeing her family in the possession of the competence she had sacrificed so much to procure. Then Roy Clifford's prophecy was realized; the splendour which had dazzled even her at first, palled upon her; the imposing mansion she called home seemed like a prison, and in her luxurious drawing-room there often rose before her a vision of a little parlour, with its soft astral lamp, its snow-white curtains, its scent of heliotrope, geraniums, and roses—the parlour once tenanted by the Cliffords. Ah! in that hour, when even the sound of John Vershire's voice thrilled her with disgust, Catherine felt the truth of what Roy had said: no human arm could support and cheer—God alone could keep her! Kneeling in the solitude of her boudoir, on the third anniversary of her marriage, she offered such prayers as find acceptance with Heaven, and the shining ones, who wait around the great white throne, brought answers of peace.

The next day, at breakfast, Mr. Vershire said:

"By-the-by, Catherine, the morning paper brings news of your old flame, Roy Clifford. He is growing famous."

Catherine gave a start.

"Yes, he was ambitious, as you know, or he would not have aspired to your hand, my dear."

One evening Mr. Vershire, on coming home to tea, found Catherine senseless beside the table; a paper damp from the press was clasped in one hand, and as he cast a glance over it he perceived an account of a massacre which had just been perpetrated, the bold resistance and the death of Clifford. He bore his wife to her chamber, believing her to be quite dead, but at length he had the satisfaction of seeing her revive. When she had grown calmer, she alluded to Roy's death, and from that time his name was a forbidden word.

Three months afterwards John Vershire lay on his death-bed, with his wife watching beside him. The night-sky arched, sullen and wrathful, overhead; the night-lamp burned dimly; the "life-clock" ticked painfully and slow in the shadowy room.

"Catherine," murmured the old man, and his girl-bride rose and bent over him.

"Child," he continued, "in this hour, the past comes back to me as vividly as if some painter were painting it all out before me. Since our marriage, you have kept your promise—you have been a faithful wife to me, my Catherine, but you have seemed like a beautiful and brilliant piece of mechanism. I beggared your life—I was the means of dooming you to wretchedness, and Roy Clifford to the fate he met. But I have repented, and believe I am forgiven. There is another way in which I would atone. Catherine, dear Catherine, do some good with the wealth I shall leave you; make the world better for your having lived in it."

I will not linger on that scene; there were tears, and prayers, and solemn promises, and then John Vershire's spirit fled.

Catherine's thoughts dwelt long on her early love. She knew Roy's mother was still living and the yearning to see her, to talk of her son, and to visit his grave, grew too strong to be resisted.

It was amid the bloom and beauty of the spring time, that she entered the little village where Mrs. Clifford lived. A moment more, and she stood rapping at the low door draped with vines, among whose flowers the wild bees were humming; it was opened by a pale, slender woman, who stared in surprise at the veiled figure in widow's weeds.

"Mrs. Clifford," and the lady flung back her veil, revealing a face almost as white and sad as her own.

"Catherine, oh, Catherine!" exclaimed Mrs. Clifford, and the next moment the two were locked in each other's arms.

They were sitting by the cottage hearth, reviewing what had passed since they met, when a tall form en-

tered. Both women cast a quick glance at the bronzed face, half-shaded by a broad-brimmed hat, and cried—

"Roy, Roy!"

"Yes, I am Roy Clifford! I was borne from the spot where I fell, unconscious, but when the miscreants found I was yet alive, they imprisoned me, and I feared I never should escape. But, thank Heaven, I have been able to get away, and here I am at last, but I did not expect to find such a guest! Catherine, Catherine, what means this?"

All was now explained, and when Roy Clifford folded Catherine to his heart once more in a wild embrace, he murmured—

"Thank God, to-night my life's sweetest dreams are realized!"

A week afterwards a quiet wedding took place in Roy Clifford's cottage, and the pair left Scotland for a bridal tour. Clifford's wife's wealth has flowed into fertilizing channels, and many have had cause to bless John Vershire's half-million.

C. F. G.

THE *Patris* states that the last steamer brought a protest from the Washington Cabinet relative to late political events in Mexico.

A CORRESPONDENT from Germany states that Queen Victoria has addressed a letter to the King of Prussia, urging on him a change of his policy.

THERE is a provision in the new Volunteer Act that the acceptance of a commission is not to render a seat in the House of Commons vacant.

IT is asserted that a meeting between her Majesty Queen Victoria and the Emperor Francis Joseph will shortly take place at the Castle of Roseneau.

THE rectory of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, which has been vacant many weeks, has not yet been filled up, very much to the surprise of the parishioners. It is in the gift of the Duke of Bedford.

IT is asserted that Sweden has given notice to several of the Powers, that she will side with Denmark in the event of hostilities breaking out between that Power and Germany.

PREPARATIONS are now in progress for installing a camp in the province of Schleswig. It will consist of from 10,000 to 12,000 men, among whom will be the Royal Guard. A corps of 10,000 men is also being assembled round Copenhagen.

SIR EDWARD LANDSEER, it is stated, has at length completed the model of his design for one of the lions to be placed at the base of the Nelson column in Trafalgar Square. He cannot be accused of hurrying his work.

THE Prince of Wales continues to have fair sport on the moors and in the forests—making pretty good bags of grouse, and bringing down his two or three stags a day. The Princess passes a good deal of her time in fishing in the Dee, and in driving in the neighbourhood.

IT is said that King Oscar of Sweden, after having had interviews with the Emperor of Austria at Vienna, and Frankfurt, has left the latter town with the conviction that a conflict between Denmark and Germany is inevitable.

IN Calcutta the capture of the man supposed to be Nana Sahib does not appear to excite much attention. The news, when first received, was regarded with considerable incredulity, and it would seem that this feeling still prevails to some extent.

A FEARFUL accident has occurred upon the Cette Railway, in consequence of the engine going off the rails and dragging and overturning two passenger carriages. Six people were killed, including the driver and guard, and many persons have been seriously injured.

A LETTER from Viège, in the canton of Valais (Switzerland), states that as two English gentlemen (whose names are not given) were crossing a dangerous part of the Simplon by the glaciers of the Fletschhorn, accompanied by two guides, one of the latter fell into a deep crevice.

THE death has been announced, on the 22nd inst., of the Right Hon. and Rev. Lord de Freyne, after a brief illness. It is said that the deceased nobleman succumbed to the same disease which carried off Sir Cresswell Cresswell and Sir F. Slade—namely, a fatty degeneration of the heart.

THE ship S. L. Tilly, of Yarmouth, N.S., Cook master, which recently arrived at Greenock from Trinidad, reports having passed great fields of ice during the passage, having had a narrow escape from collision. Captain Cook says he never saw ice so far south at the same season of the year.

THE herring fishing in the North Sea, off the Durham and Yorkshire coast, which at one time threatened to be an utter failure this season, within the past ten days has proved extremely bountiful, and will repay the fishermen for all the reverses in the early part of the season. Upon one occasion upwards of a million herrings, it was conjectured, were landed at Hartlepool,

and the sale of herrings in that town on Thursday would realize to the fishermen about £2,000.

WHEN it is known that the Royal Academy has an "accumulation fund" of £140,000, an average income of £13,272, and an average surplus of £5,209, the public will, we think, join in the opinion that this body has very small occasion for the funds of the nation to be applied to its support.

IT appears from the experiments of Mr. Horsley that the quality of the water-springs of the Cotswold Hills varies with the height and dip of the geological strata, north and south; thus the purest water is obtained from Prescot Hill and neighbourhood, and contains only eight grains per gallon of solid matter.

THE first bale of Bavarian hops arrived in the Borough Market on the 26th of August, and was sold by Messrs. R. and T. Collis to Mr. Robert Walker, hop merchant, of Stratford-on-Avon; quality very choice; the price, as in the case of the first new English pocket, will of course form no guide to the ultimate run of prices.

THE Earl of Shannon, under the heading of "Advice to Small Farmers," has published some remarks on a subject which is now attracting considerable attention among the farming community in Ireland—the advisability of their relying for the future more on the breeding and rearing of stock than on the usual system of cropping.

A VACANCY has occurred on the Royal Foundation of Military Knights of Windsor, in consequence of the death of Captain John Duncan King, which took place at No. 18, Lower Ward, Windsor Castle, on the 21st instant. The gallant deceased, who had attained the advanced age of 74 years, entered the army in August, 1806.

THE parliamentary return giving the names of the ships wrecked on the Godwin Sands, occasioning loss of life, for the twelve years ending in December, 1862, is an instructive document. From this official paper we gather that sixteen sailing-vessels and one steamer were lost on these sands during the years 1851 and 1862, with a sacrifice of eighty-nine lives.

AN extraordinary vine is now the object of admiration in the commune of Hure, near La Réole, in the arrondissement of Toulouse. It is a *chasselas* laden with no less than 2,500 bunches of grapes of enormous dimensions, being from eighteen to twenty-six centimetres in length, and crowded within a space of eight square metres.—*Galignani*.

THE plan contemplated at Washington for an invasion of Canada is to march a hundred thousand men up the district of Montreal, to cut the connexion between Upper and Lower Canada, to abstain from meddling in local affairs, but to force the separation of the Upper and Lower provinces by the mere force of the army of occupation interposing its military barrier to their intercourse.

LORD FITZGERALD has presented to his huntsman, Harry Ayres, the cup his lordship's celebrated dog Cromwell won at the last Metropolitan dog-show. The noble owner of Berkeley has had a few lines engraved upon it, commemorating the estimation in which he holds his huntsman, as also a few complimentary lines to one of the finest hounds that ever drew a cover.

ON Friday morning, the 22nd August, the fishermen of Cadgwith, near the Lizard, secured and brought to Falmouth a large whale, commonly known as a "finner," which they captured near the last-mentioned place, floating dead. It measured 74 feet in length, and 36 feet in girth, and was landed on the gridiron of Falmouth Docks on the day of the opening of the Cornwall Railway.

THE salmon season is now drawing to a close, and altogether it has been the most successful that has been experienced in the Severn and Wye for a great many years. Not only has the take of fish been greater, but the fish have been unusually fine. Fish from 20 lb. to 30 lb. in weight have been quite common, while several have been taken in the Severn 40 lb. in weight, and one recently 52 lb.

THE CHARING-CROSS RAILWAY.—This line has now been ballasted throughout from the foot of the railway bridge Pedlar's-acre, Lambeth, as far as the new street at the end of Redcross Street, Southwark, and workmen are engaged in laying down the rails on the bridge at Hungerford Market. The terminus which has been constructed on this site is nearly completed, with the exception of the immense semi-circular glass roof, which is in an advanced state.

A REPORT, just presented to the Southampton Corporation by the Council of the Hartley Institution in that town, states that Professor Parkes had most liberally offered, on the part of the Director-General of the Army and the Senate of the Army Medical School at Netley, to transfer to the institution the large collection of specimens in natural history, several thousand in number, which had been accumulated during the last thirty years by the medical officers of the army.



[SIR REGINALD FOILED IN HIS ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE HIS NEPHEW.]

VIOLETTA.

By PERCY R. ST. JOHN.

Author of "Quadroona," "Blythe Hall," "Photographs of the Heart," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
Dove-feathered raven! wolfish-ravelling lamb!
Despised substance of divinest show!
Tout opposite to what thou justly seem'st—
A damned saint, an honourable villain!
O nature! what hadst thou to do in hell,
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?
Was ever book containing such vile matter,
So fairly bound? O that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!

Shakespeare.

It would be difficult to convey an idea of the scene of confusion which followed. Sir Reginald fell back in his chair, and, burying his head in his hands, reflected deeply. John returned the caresses of his sisters and aunt with lavish interest, while Stacey looked as if he should particularly have liked to do the same.

Captains Murray and Jones conversed apart with the lawyer, Mr. Waterhouse.

Suddenly Sir Reginald Percival arose, and, speaking with a firmness and decision which astounded everybody, thus addressed them:

"I have been astonished—surprised—taken aback. A few minutes ago, my only daughter—taken from me by crime—was restored to me. This unmanned me; and now I am again called upon to recognize, in this young man, the son of my deceased brother. At all events," he added, with cool sarcasm in his tones, "it admits of examination."

"The proofs are irrefragable," said Captain Jones, taking John by the hand and leading him up to his uncle. "Do you deny the likeness?"

"There is a likeness, my dear sir; but that," he continued, with a sardonic grin, "proves nothing. I have seen remarkable coincidences of this kind before."

Jones turned up the young officer's sleeve, and showed the tattooing.

"Read that, and observe the date!" said Jones.

"J. P., March 4, 18—" he read. "It certainly is singular; but these things are commonly done on board ship." This was said with a strange glance at Captain Murray, whose presence strangely annoyed and puzzled him.

"But this was done on the night of the death of the late Sir John Percival."

"By whom?"

"By John Crosskeys."

"Your witnesses?"

"Abel Franks, William Blackmore and his wife, and Roderick Blake!" replied Captain Jones, who every instant became more choleric in his way of replying.

"Indeed!" said the baronet, still coolly, though he felt the ground was failing him. "If all this can be proved—"

"It can be proved. We have the written declaration of these parties, Roderick Blake excepted, and him we mean to hang, that this young man is Sir John Percival. Resistance to the fact is utterly useless."

"But your object in coming here—as the question can be tried in a court of law?" said Sir Reginald, haughtily.

"Uncle!" said the young man, releasing himself from his sisters; "I come on an errand of peace and mercy. Believe me, I know everything—everything, I say—and could, I believe, exact from you a fearful reckoning. But of that no more! Reginald Percival, you have a daughter. I have been the means, under Providence, of restoring her to your arms. I love her. Give her to me to wife; and let us sink the past."

"You restored my daughter to me!" gasped the old man.

"But for me, she would now be the slave of a pampered Eastern despot," said John, quietly.

"Sir, you are like the highwayman; you put a pistol to my throat, and say 'Money or your life!' Surely you would not have me decide in this hurried way. To-morrow I will lay your statement before my solicitor, and if he advise me that you are in possession of evidence that would satisfy a court of law, why, I suppose I must yield gracefully. And now make yourselves at home. I am not well. Your apartment shall be prepared for you: good-night!"

And, unable any longer to disguise his rage and fury, he turned away.

"Will you remain?" said Jones.

"Certainly," replied John, firmly. "This is my house. Something tells me he will yield, and all yet be well."

"We may not," said Captain Murray, gravely. "We will go down to the inn. I will not sleep under the same roof with that man. Adieu, John; we have brought you here in safety—be careful!"

And, after a further leave-taking of some minutes, they went out.

John remained with his sisters and aunt. After some conversation, disjointed and unconnected enough, he suddenly stopped.

"Where is Amy?" he cried.

"She retired with her mother."

"Could I not see her?"

Maud ran herself to inquire, and returned in a few minutes to announce that she was in bed. The excitement had been too much for her.

It was midnight ere the new-found relatives parted, and then John was shown to the room occupied by his father on the night of his death.

When Sir Reginald went out, burning with hate and vengeance, he at once made for this apartment, entering which, he locked the door.

He then gave a peculiar whistle, a picture in the wainscoting flew on one side, and Roderick came forth.

"Game's up!" he said, savagely.

"Not at all! He shall never inherit this property. It is mine—mine, do you hear? He must die—die, do understand, Roderick?"

"All very fine to say; but who is to do it?"

"We will do it! I tell you, Roderick, that rather than this beardless boy shall triumph, I will hang! My sons, at least, shall enjoy his place. They cannot find other heirs when he is gone."

"Let us be calm," said the other. "If anything is to be done, let us discuss the matter like sensible creatures—not like madmen."

The man who was driven in his old age to this terrible struggle for his unrighteous inheritance did, indeed, present signs of insanity. His eyes rolled fearfully in his head, his cheeks were ghastly pale, and his hands were clenched, and every moment he glanced fearfully round the room, as if he expected the dead or the living to rise before him.

"I do believe, Roderick Blake, that I am mad. There is a wild fire in my blood I never felt before; but mad or not, I say the lad must die!"

"There has been much bloodshed already," said Roderick, gravely.

"Roderick Blake, do as thou wilt—desert me if you like; but if you do, all is at an end between us. Remember, this youth is John Percival, my nephew, and should he live until to-morrow, I must go! His proofs are irrefragable—his witnesses beyond all doubt. 'Tis vain to contend."

"I will shed no more blood."

"Roderick!"

"Reginald!"

"How do you propose to live without money—how escape to America? I have none to give you. Will my new-found nephew pay your passage, eh? Think of that, man, and hesitate."

"What would you have me do?" said the escaped convict, in a surly tone.

"He will sleep in this room to-night!"

"Well!"

"We can hide ourselves in the passage which the wise old royalist, my ancestor, contrived to facilitate escape."

"Well!"

"When he is asleep we will gag him, and carry him to the cave below."

"And then—"

"Why, then—the waters of the estuary are deep. A heavy stone and a cord will take him to the bottom, to rise no more."

"But in the morning he will be missed, and suspicion will fall—"

"On whom?"

"On you, Reginald; my vicinity is totally unknown. Men will wish to know how he disappeared while under your roof."

"Am I his keeper? Can I be answerable for his vagaries. I will say: 'The young man was an impostor. I cannot be answerable for his having fled. His courage failed him. Find him, and I am prepared to disprove all his charges.' But they will not find him, Roderick!"

"You are a bold man, Reginald," said his illegitimate brother; "but something tells me the dice are clogged, and that this throw will be fatal."

"The stakes are worth a trial, and I care not who stands in my way—they should be sacrificed."

"Think of your wife!"

"Pshaw—a weak, silly fool. Ah! by the way, what wants that Murray here? I thought the fellow dead. Strange! strange! But he is the young sprig of the captain, that explains all. Still I would he had not come. I thought I had killed him in earnest. My wife, Roderick—a poor, weak, silly fool—whom I believe I never loved. 'Twas but a whim—to defeat a puppy and be revenged on her indifference. A violet for me. I did love her—and yet I hesitated not to abandon and betray. Roderick I have always, through life, learned to trample under my foot all who came in my way. My motto is go on at any price."

Why plays your shadow on the wall so convulsively? "But your children!"

"Aye, true—my children. There you have me, Roderick. I do love them. I mourned Amy for years, but my sons, I worship them."

"Might not terms be come to. He is smitten with your daughter."

"He is—but Roderick, he is surrounded by men of a stamp who will never let him wed the daughter of him who—who—never mind. He is in the first flush of passion now, but it will not last. These virtuous youths are wont to whip their passions down, and be guided by other rules than us. John Percival would never wed the daughter of Reginald, his uncle—never. But come—all think me retired to my room—this way."

And going round the bed, he entered a dark recess, and with his accomplice disappeared.

An hour or more later John Percival was escorted to the room by the obsequious domestics, amongst whom the rumour had got abroad of his identity, and though none ventured to say anything, they were kept in a constant state of feverish excitement and expectation all the evening.

"Can I do anything for you, Sir—Sir—" began the baronet's own valet.

"No, thank you; I require nothing now. Call me early, however. I would rise by daybreak."

He well knew that Amy was in the habit of rising early.

"Certainly! but—"

"But what, my friend?"

"Sir—may I say it?—may I say Sir John?" almost blubbered the old man, who had known his father.

Since the departure of Andrew Potter he had been taken into favour.

"You may—what is your name?" said John, much affected.

"Jarvis, Sir John Percival," said the man. "I was your father's valet, Sir John—he was very fond of me, Sir John—I recollect you well when that high, Sir John—God bless you, Sir John, and may I welcome your return, Sir John?"

"Certainly; my absence will be explained to-morrow, and now, my faithful Jarvis—I remember something of the name—good-night, God bless you!"

Jarvis bowed low, and hurried down-stairs to the servants' hall—not one had retired to rest—to repeat the news.

He found Abel Franks, Crosskeys, William Blackmore, and his wife had just arrived.

"What is this, Jarvis, I am told?" said the steward, eagerly.

"Sir John Percival sleeps in his father's room—our master has come home. I knew him in a minute. Besides he told us how he was Sir John—hurrah!"

"But how about Sir Reginald?" asked a burly domestic.

"Mr. Reginald," said the steward, gravely. "The fact is our young master was carried away into foreign

parts by some wicked gypsies, and has just turned up when of age. But is it true Mr. Reginald's daughter has come back?"

"It is. She was brought back by the same foreign lady as kicked up that bobbery at Brighton," observed Jarvis.

"And has Mr. Reginald yielded?" asked the steward, thoughtfully.

"Master went to bed about nine. By the way—who do you think dined with him in the library to-day?"

"I don't know."

"Roderick Blake."

"What?" gasped the steward.

"Roderick Blake."

"Impossible! you must be mistaken!"

"I saw him, when I took in the coffee, bamboozling the ladies at a fine rate," insisted Jarvis.

"And where is he now?" asked the steward in breathless haste.

"I don't know; he slipped out of the parlour when Sir John arrived."

"Silence and listen! My friends, your late master and Roderick Blake murdered the late Sir John, and abducted his child. This I know. I have been silent, because I feared for the life of my dear young master. But he is now of age, and has come to claim his own. But mark me—this quiet acceptance of Sir John, this fact of his remaining under the same roof with Reginald—conceals some infernal plot. Roderick is capable of anything. James, do you go to the village at once and fetch two constables. Tell them the notorious Dick Wraylett, alias Jones, alias Drake, alias Roderick Blake, is in this house, and that the £100 reward will be half theirs if they are quick. I will hand over the other half to the poor."

James listened with awe, and then, despite the late hour, went to the stables, saddled a horse, and galloped wildly along the road to the village.

He had not been gone ten minutes, when the conversation in the servants' hall was interrupted in a most startling manner.

A pistol was fired, and then loud cries were heard from the upper rooms.

All stood aghast.

"I knew it! I knew it!" cried the steward, raising his hands on high; "follow me all, in the name of Heaven."

He rushed up-stairs, burst open the door of the yellow room, and stood aghast at the fearful spectacle which presented itself.

John Percival, who, on the morn, was to be proclaimed heir to a baronetcy and a vast rent-roll, went to bed with the calm of youth, and slept as only sailors, who have been rocked to slumber by the sounding billows of the ocean, can sleep.

He had given a few moments to the thought of Amy, and of their morning's meeting, and then nature's sweet restorer conquered his faculties. The master of the house slept.

There was a night-lamp on a table beside him, which shed a dim light over the large room, and by this light, a short time after, two figures might have been seen advancing from the recess so often alluded to towards the bed.

Their faces were ghastly.

Reginald Percival led the van. In his hand he clutched a knife. He did not intend, in all probability, to use it, except in self-defence—but he had it in his hand.

Roderick had a cord in his left hand; in his right was a large handkerchief.

Reginald Percival laid his knife on the table beside the bed, and then drew the curtain.

A wild and piercing shriek caused him to turn round, and still the sailor slept.

His wife—her eyes inflamed—her hair over her shoulders—her face livid with horror, stood before him.

"Stay, Reginald! Would you be an assassin? Wouldst kill your own nephew?"

"Woman, what want you here?" said Reginald, standing aghast before her.

And still the sailor slept.

"I came to save your soul from this last crime; at least be not an assassin!"

"Woman, away! he shall die!" and infuriated at the course events were taken—regardless of consequences—he snatched up the knife. His arm fell powerless as he did so. It was broken by a pistol-shot.

With a curse he fell to the ground, while Roderick would have escaped had not Captains Jones and Murray, with Edward Stacey, burst from behind a large press which hitherto had concealed them.

John Percival sat up in bed rubbing his eyes.

"What means all this?" he said.

"I will explain," said Eleanor, wildly. "This afternoon a man came under curious circumstances to the house. Indited by some strange curiosity, I wished to know the visitor's business. I knew Sir Reginald had a bedroom, whence a passage led to the library. I found a key to fit it—I entered and made my way

round to where a screen alone separated me from Reginald Percival and Roderick Blake."

Wildly glared the wounded man, who had raised himself on one arm—while Roderick listened with sullen indifference.

"I listened. I expected some low intrigue. I learned that the real heir to this house and its broad lands, still lived, and I heard too, that he was coming to claim his own. Then came the fearful plot which I determined to overthrow. My first idea was to inform Reginald Percival that I knew all; but my intention was defeated by the arrival of my daughter, and then of Sir John Percival. I knew his uncle's calm reception of him concealed some fearful plot. This house, built in days when evil was even more rife than now, abounds in secret passages. I concealed myself here, and overheard another fearful plot. Sir John Percival was to be brought here, and when asleep, gagged and thrown into the estuary. I at once communicated with your friends, young man; they laid a trap, and your enemies have been baffled. Close the door, Abel Franks, and you, Sir John, be merciful."

"He shall," cried Jones, "but hang me, if he can marry the daughter now."

"Amy is not his daughter," said Eleanor, frantically.

"Not my child!" gasped Reginald, while all the others remained speechless with astonishment.

"Amy is the daughter of Captain Charles Murray, to whom I was married five weeks before the second marriage to Sir Reginald."

"I knew it—she is my child!" cried the captain, clasping his hands.

"His child?" gasped the false baronet.

"I must tell my story. I married Captain Murray in secret. We had not been united but two or three days when he left me. A month after Sir Reginald Percival came to me, told me my husband was dead, and asked for my hand. I laughed at him, and told him I was a widow. He asked me for proofs. The copy of the certificate had been stolen for him by my maid Rosa, and the original, cut out of the register, was in his possession. He threatened to ruin me. Rosa had seen my husband leave my room on the morning of his departure. He would expose me to my father. I was mad. I forgot the evidence of clergyman and witnesses. His threats chilled my very soul. I married him. My husband returned to curse me—he would not hear my story. Gentlemen, do with me as you please—my daughter is the child of an honourable man. My poor boys!—have mercy."

"Woman, the proofs!" said Sir Reginald, with a sardonic grin.

"Are here. Passing through your room last night, I saw some drawers open. Papers caught my eye in a desk. They were chiefly love letters, but as I greedily looked over the evidence of your many perjuries, I found the missing certificates of my marriage. Captain Murray, they are yours. To your custody I consign her—her mother has no right to her—she is not worthy!"

"Hush, Eleanor, darling!" said the captain, wildly; "martyr and saint!"

"Will no one save me from bleeding to death?" gasped Reginald. "Tis all true—I yield up everything—but be merciful, for my boys' sake."

"Bolt the door—let no one enter!" said Sir John, sternly. "Merciful we will be, but you must leave this country."

"Young man, I am dying. Twenty-four hours will send me to a grave. The mercy I ask is for my children. Take me to another room."

"Wait!" said Roderick, boldly, "if I go to prison I tell all."

"Villain!"

"Speak more mildly to the son of your father's father," said the ruffian. "I am your uncle, and if I swing will leave a stain on the name of Percival generations shall not wipe out. Spare me—give me the means to reach America, and in that new land I will strive by honest labour to redeem the past."

"Sir John," said Eleanor, "he would have spared you!"

"Release him. Captain Jones, let his passage be paid to America."

"I am an escaped convict," replied the man, "and hunted like the hare. On my soul all I came here for was to gain the means of escape."

"What ask you?"

"Fifty pounds. I have the police to baffle, and must go by way of France. With that I shall laud in New York penniless."

"You shall find a hundred more when you arrive there. Go—," and John from the bed threw him a roll of notes.

Roderick Blake stepped back into the recess, and without a word disappeared through the open panel.

Meanwhile Franks had, with the assistance of Stacey, led Reginald to his own room, the servants were sent down, and the victors remained in conference.

Eleanor had rejoined her daughter utterly over- come.

CHAPTER XXXVII

She never told her love.

My memory served me far more fondly. I have not forgotten aught; and oft-times in the proud and princely halls of — (I'll not name them, As you say that 'tis perilous) — but the pomp Of your sire's feudal mansion, I look'd back To the Bohemian mountains many a sunset, And wept to see another day go down O'er thee and me, with those huge hills between us. They shall not part us more. — *Werner.*

STRANGE events had occurred in the county of —, High and low, rich and poor, heard with astonishment that the child supposed to have been drowned so many years before had returned from abroad.

So sudden had been the shock to the system of poor dear Sir Reginald, that he died two days after the return of the rightful heir.

But not a shade of doubt existed of Sir John's claim to be the son of old Sir John. The whole affair had originated, it was said, in the revengeful spirit of an illegitimate relative.

And then, as the year expired, his widow married her old sweetheart, Charles Murray, after all.

Such is the way the world goes.

It was three weeks after that interesting event, and the morning of the day which was to unite John and Amy in the holy bonds of matrimony.

The ceremony was to be performed at the church of Trewarren, and the whole party, therefore, had congregated at the house. There were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Murray, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and Edward Stacey and Maud—also about to be married, and Julia.

Never had Julia looked so resplendently beautiful as on this day. Her jet-black eyes shone with unusual lustre, while her superb form dilated as if with pride at the pinnacle to which her pupil had risen.

Her dress was white satin, but not whiter than her skin.

She wore no ornaments or jewels—not one.

She had aided Violet to dress Amy, and was now with the bridesmaids in the drawing-room.

Violet had come down for the ceremony, but had refused to appear in public.

Julia had declined being bridesmaid on the plea that they should be quite young girls.

"How beautiful—how lovely—why does she not marry?" was whispered round the room as Judith entered.

She was sole heiress of Captain Jones, and had refused many offers.

"Come to my side," said Amy, gently.

She knew and appreciated the noble girl who had saved John Percival from ruin.

"Why, my pet?" replied Julia, with one of her soft seductive smiles.

"Julia—why are you so beautiful, so much admired, loved—why—why—don't you get married?" she whispered.

Julia was ghastly pale—she could not be paler. But there was a nervous twitching of the mouth which showed intense suffering.

She answered, however, with frightful calmness: "Amy, my love, you forget I am a Jewess. My old nation reject me—but my new people do not adopt me. Besides, I do not wish to marry!"

"Nonsense. You must love somebody; I really must get John to talk to you, Julia. He can do anything with you."

"The carriages are ready," said Julia, rising suddenly.

It was time. The carriages were ready. They drove to the church. John Percival and Edward Stacy were united to those they loved by the sacred bond of matrimony. He was radiant with happiness.

The two brides and bridegrooms occupied the same carriage on their return, and reached the castle first. They alighted to assist their blushing partners in descending, and then another carriage swept up.

Julia was in it.

John saw a strange look upon her face, and hastily dropping his wife's arm, flew to open the other carriage-door, and caught Julia in his arms.

She was fainting.

"Lay me down. I shall be better presently—don't be alarmed, John."

John made no answer, but, followed by the terrified company, carried up-stairs the devoted girl, who so often in days gone by carried him.

"Tis your turn now, John," she whispered, faintly, with one of her divine smiles.

He still did not speak, but laid her gently down upon a couch, and turned to order a doctor to be summoned.

"It's too late, Johnny, dear!" she said; "my heart is broken."

"Julia!"

"Call me Judith, as you did when we were happy, Johnny!" she whispered.

"Happy—Heavens, Judith, since when have you been unhappy?" he asked.

The rest stood back to give her air. Amy alone was

near, kneeling at her head, but unseen by the fainting sufferer.

"Since we left Chick Lane."

"But Judith, why have you been unhappy since then?"

"Oh Johnny! Johnny," she said, with a faint smile, "there you loved no one but me, and I did love you so. Then I was not the poor despised Jewess—but you darling—"

"Despised Jewess," he cried, striking his head with both his hands, "you cannot think—"

"You didn't mean it, Johnny dear—I was very foolish. After eight years, Johnny, I thought we should never be parted. I never thought of friends or relations, or," this very faintly, "a wife."

"Great Heavens!"

"I was a poor, ignorant girl, knowing nothing of the world, and my dream was to be by your side for ever."

Here, as the company gradually withdrew to another room, loud sobs were heard at the head of the couch.

"Is that you, Amy? you are not angry, darling?"

"I couldn't help it, indeed I could not, it was not my fault."

"Julia, why did you not tell me this before. The devotion of such a heart as yours is worth fifty affectations like mine!"

John was speechless. He had never suspected this; no, not for one moment.

"Amy, dear, 'twas his love I wanted, and that was all yours. I am weak and wicked, but I knew it would kill me. 'Tis hard to give up the dream of years. Do you recollect, Johnny, the night you came to me? Do you recollect the dinner? Do you recollect the old woman, the few scraps we fed on?"

"I do Judith."

"And the old book you learned me to read from, Johnny."

"Yes," sobbed the young baronet.

"Oh Johnny! Johnny! those were my happy days. I had no dread then, no fear. I was all you had. I had no rival then. Raise me up—I am dying, Johnny—'tis better so. I should only have been in the way."

"A doctor! a doctor!" shrieked the agonized young man.

"No doctor can save me. Johnny, be kind and good to dear Amy. She will make you a good wife—she will be the pride of the county—and then, you know, Johnny, darling, she's a lady, and not a poor, outcast Jewess."

There was a laugh upon her pallid lips, but no sound.

"Great Heaven! dying, and no doctor. Give me the salts—Julia—Judith, darling—my own, my dear sister!"

"Sister!—yes," she whispered, as he pillowed her head on his shoulder. "That's it—kiss me, brother!" He did so.

A heavenly smile played upon her face, and she was dead.

The poor unfortunate victim of misplaced affection had literally died of a broken heart.

To deplete the bitter grief of John and Amy, the consternation of the guests, the unspeakable horror of Mr. and Mrs. Jones, would be to harass our readers, perhaps, uselessly.

It will be sufficient to say that the day was entirely broken up, and all left the house of death, save its owners, Sir John and Lady Percival.

Amy had remained in a swoon for hours after her adopted sister's death.

John, himself, flew about like a madman. The doctor, who had been sent for for Julia, found the bride and bridegroom dangerously ill.

Two years have passed, and a lady and gentleman are walking on the lawn, round and round the spot where a nurse is just teaching a child to walk.

It is a little girl.

Suddenly the lady steps in her walk.

"Julia!" she says, holding out her hands.

The child sprang from its nurse, and ran for the first time alone, along the green sward to its mother's arms.

It is Sir John and Lady Percival and their little daughter.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Murray are happy—but there is a void in the house of Captain Jones which never can be filled up.

Roderick Blake went to Texas, and got killed by some fiery spirit who took offence at his brutality.

Violet married.

THE END.

The salmon season is now drawing to a close, and altogether has been the most successful that has been experienced in the Severn and Wye—two of the most important salmon streams of England—for a great many years. Not only has the take of fish been greater, but the fish have been unusually fine. Fish from 20 lb. to

30 lb. in weight, have been quite common, while several have been taken in the Severn 40 lb. in weight, and one recently 52 lb. The taking of such large fish is one of the most significant signs of improvement in the management of the fisheries. The Act of 1861, for the improvement of the salmon fisheries, and protection of the fish when in a breeding condition, has, no doubt had a salutary effect.

HANDSOME MEN.

THE *Galena Transit* thus discourses: "What a very rare thing is a handsome man. When we look around among our friends and acquaintances, or upon the crowds we encounter in our daily walks, what a very small quantity of fine, classical features do we meet with. How rare are 'high and lofty' foreheads, and 'finely chiselled' nostrils. On the contrary, what numbers of snipe and snub noses, of high cheek-bones and hollowed-cheeks, of extensive mouths, *sans* teeth, of dull and sunken eyes, of cadaverous complexions, encounter us at every turn. How many are short and fat, how many long and lanky; and nearly all how awkward! In fact, a very handsome man ought to be taken hold of and put in a show. It is not fitting that he be allowed to go at large. What is he but a reproach to his fellow-creatures—an odious comparison, a walking insult! Let him be confined or tattooed. It may not be new, but it is very true, that most things are valued in proportion to their rarity. Men are vain of personal beauty than women, and far less skillful in concealing their vanity; consequently, a handsome man is a decided impertinence—a thorough-bred Narcissus. He is of opinion that the business of the world stands still in order to give the people engaged therein leisure to contemplate him. When he appears, he thinks all thoughts and emotions in the breasts of every one present are suspended or obliterated in order to make room for an intense feeling of admiration. He feels quite certain that every woman who looks upon him loves him, and that her peace of mind is from thenceforth sacrificed; and he has even the egregious folly to suppose that he is admired by those of his own sex! Poor, deluded mortal! Little does he dream that men of sense never bestow a thought upon his pretty face."

PUNISHMENT OF IDLE HUSBANDS IN NEW ZEALAND.

THE head chief often interferes in minor matters of a domestic nature. For instance: if a lazy fellow has a wife or two and a few children, and through his love for fishing, dancing, and loitering idly about, neglects to bring in the necessary supplies for his family, a complaint is made, the chief visits the house in person, and if he sees just ground for punishment, he orders out the population of the village. Men, women, and children arm themselves with a stiff birch, made of small canes; then form a long double line, about six feet apart, and wait with anxious gloom the approach of the delinquent. At last he is placed at one end of the line, amidst a shower of yells, screams, jibes, &c. The word is given by the chief, and away he darts at his utmost speed through the ranks, every one endeavouring to hit him as he passes. According to his deserts, he may get off with running the line once, or he may have to do so twice or thrice; but he is skilled in running and fleetness that can run the lines even once without having his skin tickled for him by the hearty application of the birch, wielded by some strong women!

As the punishment is not of a fatal kind, the whole affair creates unrestricted merriment. If the victim is a smart fellow, he may escape with few blows; but if he is sulky, heavy, and dogged, he pays for it. Such a man comes off covered with welts on his bare skin, from his head to his heels. For one month afterwards his family are provided for by the public at large, under the fatherly superintendence of the chief. At the expiration of that time, if he has all his domestic matters in perfect order, as a good father and provident husband ought to have, he again resumes his place in society, and shortly afterwards, perhaps, helps with an experienced hand, to flogellate some one else.—*Adventures in South America.*

JUSTICE WITHOUT MERCY.—That law may be justice, and yet lack mercy, has been illustrated by a very hard case which was heard the other day before the Preston magistrates. A poor man named Hethersall was charged with trespassing in a field, and doing damage to the extent of a penny. When charged with this grave offence, the following proceedings took place: Defendant: I plead guilty. I hope you will be as merciful as you can. I am a labourer, and work for the guardians on the cattle-market.—The Chairman: Well, but you know land must be protected. Defendant: I'm sorry. I hope you will be lenient. I only earn a shilling a day, and out of that have to keep myself, my wife, and two children. I can't pay any fine.—The Bench: What were you doing in the field? Defendant:

Well, I had gone to get a few mushrooms for our dinner.—The bench: You are fined half-a-crown and costs; you must also pay the damage; and, in default, you must go to the House of Correction for a month. Defendant: Well, I can't pay, gentlemen.—He was then removed to one of the cells.

THAT some approach toward civilization is likely to be made by the sable monarch of Dahomey may be inferred from the fact of his having recently given orders for the construction of two English carriages, and which luxuries are intended for his Majesty and Queen. Both carriages, when in use by the African Monarch and Queen, will, by means of ropes, be drawn by twenty and ten slaves respectively.

SOME time since, a fine foxhound ran into St. George's Hospital, and was turned out by the porter. The dog, however, would not be denied, and again ventured into the building, and took refuge under one of the beds. It was then discovered that his leg was broken. He was, therefore treated like any other patient; the broken limb was set, and the dog is now doing well, and running about quite happy and contented with his new residence.

THE BARKING DOG.

It was not a large but a lovely farm and cottage that Syphax Churl bought, a few miles from the city, and placed his gentle wife, Aurelia, in the rural retreat.

"And I should think you might be contented now," said he, with a growl. "For me, I am contented anywhere. I made this purchase on your account."

And so he did, for Churl was a jealous, suspicious, unsympathising body, and by thus giving his lonely wife the company of birds and flowers, thought she would the less languish for all other society of which she was deprived.

"I shall certainly be more cheerful here than in the city," said she, meekly; and now experienced her chief joy in tending the fine garden in front of the house, while he, during the day, was engaged in town.

But Churl was given to reproachfulness, and soon made himself uneasy at the floral occupation of his wife.

"You are exposed to the view of passers-by," said he, "and I notice that you give away nosegays to little children. Both are wrong. You should keep more retired, and not give away said nosegays. No use to raise flowers to give away."

"But they are growing and blooming all the time again," pleaded she, "and it is well to create friendship among our neighbours, by little kindnesses."

"No it isn't," replied Churl. "I deny that thing. It will make people too familiar. They will think we are good-natured, and by-and-by enter upon our premises and steal. Keep them at a distance and they will respect you the more."

"But Syphax, I am always at home, to guard the property. I never go away."

"There you are again," cried he, "always contradicting! Never satisfied. You haven't forty eyes, or you might see to everything. Suppose you should fall asleep. In the country, people are very inquisitive. They will invent plenty of plans for poking their noses in here, and if they catch you napping they will be for nabbing what they like and walking off."

"I wish you would keep a dog, Syphax."

"A dog! I hate dogs."

"A good Newfoundland. So handsome, faithful, and affectionate."

"Affectionate for three or four pounds of meat every day. It costs too much to buy one, and too much to feed him. I want no dog. I can do my own barking."

Both he and his wife agreed upon that, until Syphax Churl found that a dog might prove a very useful animal to have about the house.

While he was away in the city, and his wife was busy about her household affairs, it was ascertained that children trespassed upon his grounds, and sometimes did a little mischief. This could not be tolerated by an irritable, unsocial man like Churl, and he fired up about it. Moreover, country pedlars made frequent visits at the door, and often induced Mrs. Churl to make bargains, which Mr. Churl denounced as extravagant, when he came home. And beggars added themselves to the list of callers, and Mrs. Churl freely gave them food, clothes, and alms, and would have given them legs, where they happened to minus, if it had been in her power.

All this made the inveterate grumbler grumble the more, and he resolved to put a stop to it, by devising a method to scare such visitors away.

"I will get a small dog, of some kind," declared he; "one big enough to snap at their shins, and not too large to pay for his board. A dog is a useful beast, after all. There is a wholesome tonic in his bark, and in his bite there's a sovereign remedy against intrusion. Aurelia, I shall try a dog."

He put up a notice at the gate.

"Wanted, a dog—cheap. Must be of a prudent size, ugly in looks and uglier in temper, with a bark that's sharp, and a bite that's sharper. Anybody too

poor to keep a dog with such qualities, can get him a good home without charge, by applying to me, Syphax Churl. Apply from sunrise to eight, and from five till sundown."

"Ha, ha, Aurelia!" laughed Churl. "Fresh meat gratis, I might have added—when it comes from the calves of beggars, boys, and pedlars' legs."

They came. "Tray, Blanche, and Sweetheart, little dogs and all," curs of high and low degree, dogs with and without names—the innumerable crosses in their composition seeming to make them cross in disposition, and ranking them indisputably among the pests of the highway.

The owners through their agents, the boys and girls who brought them, professed a desire to do a good turn to a new neighbour; but he rejected all the proffered gifts, after a curious scrutiny, except a snarling mongrel which he chose for his remarkably ill face and discordant voice, as well as for his reputation of being a little eater, which the lean appearance of the animal seemed to verify, nobody having considered him worth feeding.

"He is enough to scare the d—!" said Churl, with a grin; "and as he is accustomed to scant rations, it will be well not to break him of the habit. His fare must be next to nothing. This will make him less expensive, and keep him hungry and savage, and he will be the better watch-dog. I shall call him Snap. What a voice. Worse than an hotel gong."

"You appear to like him all the better for that," said Mrs. Churl, with a disappointed look. She had hoped at least for a good-looking dog.

"And why not? We must have a scarecrow."

"In such a beautiful place as this? He will be company, at any rate," said she, with resignation.

"What are you doing now?"

"Giving him a bit of meat to make him feel at home."

"Well, that'll do for once. But don't often do it. It will make him too mild and easy."

Churl put Snap in the barn, and the happy pair retired for the night—but not to rest; for the dog howled and barked till daylight, while Mrs. Churl complained of loss of sleep, and expostulated. It was cruel to keep the dog hungry and her awake.

"But he keeps thieves away," argued the unfeeling Churl. "He'll be a splendid watch-dog, and you can doze all day. What a fine harsh voice! Hear him now! Hear that whine! Hear that bark!"

"I wish I couldn't," cried she, "I shall need wine and bark, of another kind, to steady my nerves."

"That joke is old. You can't impose upon me. I am determined not to be imposed upon by any one, as long as I keep a dog."

Churl finally went to sleep, lulled by the music of a beast as ill-natured as himself; and when he woke, found his wife dressed, sitting in a chair.

"Promotes early rising," said he, getting up. "There's another advantage. I don't know what I would take for that dog."

After packing her husband off for the city, mindless of his parting injunction to keep a good look-out for Snap, and not permit any one to steal him, Mrs. Churl, exhausted, fell sound asleep, for hours; and the dog became the sole guardian of the premises, administering several severe bites to sundry harmless children, who entered the garden as usual, in search of the smiling face of Mrs. Churl, who commonly welcomed them with flowers; and, this time, receiving bites instead of bouquets. They hurried home, crying and bleeding, while their garden-angel slept, unconscious of the active malice of the new domestic Cerberus.

A terrible hollabaloo at last awoke her from her slumber, and, opening the door, she found that Snap, too cowardly to attack a man, was doing his best to irritate one, the butcher, at whom he barked at a safe distance, and who was swearing and hurling stones at him.

Mrs. Churl did what she could to mollify the angry butcher, but he refused to be pacified, and vowed that he would never stop at her gate again, if the dog was not gagged, killed, or sent away.

Other useful bringers of household comforts, similarly assailed during the day, came to the same wrathful conclusion; and much inconvenience was the ultimate consequence—Churl having to do many errands for himself.

On the following day, the amiable Churl was waited upon by the parents of the bitten children, who bitterly remonstrated against his keeping such a vicious, worthless cur.

"Only doing his duty," replied Churl. "He has a right to drive out all who don't belong here. That is precisely what I got him for. It is not his fault or mine if he gives such proofs of noble fidelity."

The indignant parents withdrew, shaking their heads, followed by the snarling dog, who exhibited an unmistakable desire to shake them if he could and dared.

Snap was sagacious, and, with a keen dog's eye, saw that his course was approved. So in time he grew more impudent; and, the gate being open, he ventured

beyond his master's dominions, and for a while barked outside of the gate, and then illustrated his barking with a bite—which cost Churl five shillings, as the father of the wounded boy threatened to sue him for damages.

But though Churl thus bought his exemption from the fangs of the law, for once, the "fidelity" of his ugly beast soon caused greater difficulties to thicken upon him.

While he was giving the dog a whipping, Snap bit him also, and tore his wife's five-pound dress. Repairing to the nearest shop, for medicine, he found that everybody there scowled at him; for Snap had achieved an unpleasant renown in the neighbourhood, and man and dog were regarded as one.

Snap was cursed as a danger, and a disgrace; an altercation ensued; somebody hoped every cowardly inhospitable churl who kept such a dog would die of hydrophobia; Churl retorted, by intimating that none but thieves could hold spite against a watch-dog! and Churl was immediately pummelled severely, and obliged to decamp without purchasing any kind of balm for his wounds and bruises.

"This is a wretched state of affairs!" complained he to his wife.

"All caused by that hateful dog," said she.

"Not it is not," denied he. "That's woman's reasoning. Always laying the blame where it don't belong. The fact is, there's a bad set of people around here, and the dog knows it. The instinct of a dog is wonderful!"

"And his venom is detestable, when he is a mongrel. I am afraid, Syphax, that that dog will yet cause us a great deal of trouble."

"And I am afraid, Aurelia, that you don't know anything about him. The dog is a victim of mistaken zeal. He suffers for his faith."

"He abuses his liberty, the black-looking, malicious brute!"

"He is to guard our property."

"A black-guard, then."

"I hope he will bite all the neighbours," declared Churl, revengingly. "But, for the present, I think I will chain him, and see if his wonderful bark, together with the reputation he has already achieved, will make him a sufficient terror to interlopers."

Churl accordingly chained the dog, who now barked almost incessantly, day and night, scarcely allowing himself time for a nap. But whether he was a terror or not, he soon proved such a noisy nuisance that some of the neighbours again waited upon Churl; and while some complained of the continual noise, others, whose children had been bitten, declared that they would surely run mad from the bites, unless the dog was shot, and appealed to him to do it.

"Miserable superstition!" sneered he. "If the dog had been killed before he bit, it might have prevented much mischief; but to kill him afterwards is no remedy, but revenge. Locking a barn-door don't bring back a stolen horse. I shan't shoot my dear dog, on superstitious grounds."

"You may sneer at superstition," they replied, "but you may find your dog shot by a ghost, yet; and dogs have been shot by mistake—yes, sir, and men too, when there was nobody looking."

They departed, looking wicked, and the last insinuation impressed him very deeply.

"Does this vile set of ungodly sinners mean to shoot me some dark night, I wonder? I shouldn't be surprised. What a delightful place the country is, Aurelia, to be sure, where a man can't presume to protect his own property without endangering his life. I must keep a sharp look-out for these fellows."

For several nights afterwards Churl was startled in his bed by the report of guns near the house; but he did not dare to keep the promised sharp look-out, for fear of being sharply hit by some unseen, vindictive neighbour, whom he supposed to be prowling around for the purpose in the disguise of a ghost. But the reports were designed only to scare him.

Churl now began to feel so disagreeably, that he sighed for an abode in the city once more.

"I find myself unpopular, Aurelia, in this beautiful Garden of Eden, and as soon as I can get a decent price I shall sell. I thought that when I got that dog it was the dawning of peace. But I find that neither dog nor d— can be at rest out here. Where shall I find a purchaser? Perhaps my neighbours will be so glad to get rid of me that they will buy. I'll see."

He saw, and ascertained that they would not. On the contrary, they declared they would discourage all purchasers.

Churl defied them, and in time sent out, from the city, a stranger who had prepared to purchase at a handsome price. But this man, intimidated by the dog, who was turned loose for a holiday, was warned away by the neighbours, who showed him better property, which he bought.

"Alas!" cried Churl, "my property is defended too well. This is a positive calamity—to have a wife who watches too little, and a dog who watches altogether too much. Where's that gun?"

As Mrs. Churl thought that he might intend suicide, she made no objection to the heavy charge he put in. But he went out and shot the dog, which, she thought, answered nearly as well. The dog was now dead; but the heavy charge had burst the gun, and maimed Churl's hand, costing him two fingers, and a surgeon's fee for a month.

But this was by no means the end. While Churl was getting well, a neighbour's boy died of hydrophobia, and Churl was soon hauled up before a court, to answer a suit for damages to the amount of £1,000.

Churl's counsel pleaded hard for a client who had shot his dog and lost two fingers, but the judge happening to remark that this did not bring the boy back to life, nor guarantee future safety to the other bitten children, the jury were stern, and brought in a verdict for £500 against Churl—the exact sum for which he managed to sell the house and farm. M. O. W.

IVORY.

THE immense demand for elephants' teeth, has of late years increased the supply of ivory from all parts of Africa. At the end of the last century the annual average importation into England was only 192,600 lb.; in 1827 it had reached 364,784 lb., or 6,080 tusks, which would require the death of at least 3,040 male elephants. To produce 1,000,000 lb. of ivory, the present annual English import, we should require (estimating each tusk at 60 lb.) the lives of 8,333 male elephants. It is said that 4,000 tuskers (or persons engaged in the collection of tusks) suffer death every year to supply this country with combs, knife-handles, billiard-balls, &c. A tusk weighing 70 lb. and upward is considered by dealers as first-class.

Cuvier formed a table of the most remarkable tusks of which any account has been given. The largest on record was one which was sold at Amsterdam, which weighed 350 lb. In some late sales in London the largest of the Bombay and Zanzibar was 122 lb.; of Angola and Lisbon, 69 lb.; of Cape of Good Hope and Natal, 106 lb.; of Cape Coast Castle, Lagos, &c., 114 lb.; of Gaboon, 91 lb.; of Egyptian, 114 lb. But it must not be inferred that large tusks are now rare. On the contrary, it is probable that more long and heavy teeth are now brought to market than in any previous century. A short time ago an American firm cut up a tusk that was 9½ feet long, 8 inches in diameter, and which weighed nearly 800 lb. The same firm, in 1851, sent to the World's Fair the largest piece of ivory ever sawed out. By wonderful machinery invented in their own factory, they sawed out (and the process of sawing did the work of polishing at the same time) a strip of ivory 41 feet long and 12 inches wide, and received rewarding attention from the commission.

The most costly tusks, or portions of tusks, are those which are used for billiard-balls. What are termed "cut points," of just the right size for billiard-balls, from 2½ to 3½ inches diameter, brought the highest price (£63) per cut of any ivory offered in the London market at recent sales. Billiard-ball making has of late, become a very important item of manufacture in this country.

The teeth from the West Coast, with the exception of Gaboon, are less elastic, and less capable of bleaching, than those that come from other portions of Africa. The West Coast tusks are much used for knife-handles. Since the French have possessed Algeria, they receive a considerable portion of ivory from Central Africa by the large caravans that travel from Timbuctoo northward. Ivory is also furnished by the walrus, or sea-horse, and commands a price equal to the best qualities of elephant ivory. It is, however, too hard and non-elastic for many purposes, and has the disadvantage of being too small to cut up profitably.

SCIENCE.

PLUMBAGO has recently been introduced as the basis of a superior cement for steam joints, and the general metallic connections of the engineer. It is composed of 6 parts of plumbago, 3 of slacked lime, 8 of sulphate of baryta, and 3 of boiled linseed oil. This compound, it is said, secures a perfectly air and steam-tight joint, much superior to that obtained by the use of red lead.

A FIRM in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, are making a gun from wrought iron, which will weigh, when completed, about 17 tons. It is forged solid, in an octagonal form, with the cavity bored out 13 in. in diameter, and will be hooped with strong bands of iron put on by hydraulic pressure. The lathe on which the metal is being turned is one of the largest in the world.

A NEW TUBER.—Among other things recently introduced into France is a new tuber, brought from Peru by M. Cochet, who has resided twenty years in South America. This new plant has been cultivated for two years in the Jardin d'Acclimatation of the Bois de Boulogne, and has passed two winters without requiring more attention than the potato. Besides its nutritive and medicinal properties, it is very rich in sugar of a

quality superior to that of beetroot. The yield of this plant per hectare will average 150,000 kilograms (60 tons) per English acre. In honour of its introducer this valuable root is called the Poire de terre Cochet.—*Guernsey Star*.

HOTTEST DAY OF THE CENTURY.—The extraordinary temperature experienced in Paris this summer has drawn the following remarks from M. J. A. Barral, Professor of Chemistry:—"Sunday, the 9th of August, was the hottest day, not only of the present year, but of this century. In some places the thermometer marked 102.2 Fahr. in the shade, at half-past two p.m.; it marked 96.8 at half-past four. In the sun the temperature was 149 F. To find a temperature equal to the above we must go back full a hundred years. It is a curious circumstance that in the north of Paris the heat has not been so oppressive, in London the thermometer has not averaged more than 72 F., and we learn from the French coast that, both at Dieppe and Etretat, on Sunday, the weather was so chilly as to make a resort to great coats necessary."

THE money value of a reduced death-rate is shown in startling figures in Dr. Gairdner's work on Public Health. He assumes that there has been an average of 3,750 lives saved annually by the sanitary improvements of the town of Liverpool. Basing the calculation of the value of a productive human life on the tables of Dr. Farr, he estimates that an annual saving of £617,500 has been effected, which, at twenty-five years' purchase, amounts to £15,437,500; deducting £1,059,387 for public and private works, there remains a nett gain to the community of £14,378,113. Without inquiring minutely into the astounding figures which are adduced, there can be no doubt that sanitary regulations in such a town as Liverpool must have a decided influence on the value of human life. As these regulations not only mainly originated with, but have been carried out by members of the medical profession, the public cannot fail to appreciate the services which practitioners of medicine confer upon them, not only in the treatment, but in the prevention of disease.

TELEGRAPHIC PROGRESS.—The thirty-fourth half-yearly ordinary general meeting of the Electric and International Telegraph Company has been held. The report stated that during the past half-year a considerable extension of the company's system, amounting to 754 miles of line, and 2,666 miles of wire, had taken place. The reduction of the tariff since June, 1862, had, as anticipated, retarded the progressive advance of the company's income. From the Continental traffic a steady enlargement of business continued. The revenue of the company, from all sources, amounted to £117,210 4s. 8d., showing an increase of £14,843 4s. 8d. on the corresponding period of 1862. After making provision for the working expenses, and interest, the net surplus of profit on the six months amounted to £39,061 17s. 5d. The directors recommended a dividend of £8 10s. per cent. for the half-year. The report was adopted.

TEA TASTING.—Few of our readers are aware that tea-tasting is reduced to a regular profession, one which is as certain death to a man as the continued practice of opium-eating. The success of the tea-broker, or taster, depends upon the trained accuracy of his nose and palate, his experience in the wants of the markets, and a keen business tact. If he has these qualities in high cultivation, he may make from two to three thousand pounds per annum while he lives, and die of ulceration of the lungs. He overhauls a cargo of tea, classifies it, and determines the value of each sort. In doing this, he first looks at the colour of the leaf, and the general cleanliness of it. He next takes a quantity of the herb in his hand, and breathing his warm breath upon it, he sniffs up the fragrance. In doing this he draws into his lungs a quantity of irritating and stimulating dust, which is by no means wholesome. Then, sitting down to a table in his office, on which is a long row of little porcelain cups and a pot of hot water, he "draws" the tea and tastes the infusion. In this way he classifies the different sorts to the minutest shade; makes the different prices, and is then ready to compare his work with the invoice. The skill of these tasters is fairly a marvel, but the effect of the business on their health is ruinous. They grow lean, nervous and consumptive. At the end of a hard day's work they feel and act as fidgetty and cross as if they had the hysterics.

THE EFFECTS OF CONGELATION ON WATER.

DR. ROBINET, a member of the Academy of Medicine, Paris, has published an account of experiments conducted by him to test the effects of congelation upon drinking-water. It is well-known that the ice which is formed in the sea yields nothing but fresh water, all the salt having been eliminated by congelation. In the northern parts of Europe this property is turned to account for the extraction of salt from sea-water; for a large sheet of the latter having been left to freeze, the ice is afterwards cut away, and the unfrozen water left below is so rich in salt as to require very little evaporation to yield it in a solid state. This property will also serve to analyze wine. Suppose it was re-

quired to determine the quantity of water fraudulently added to a certain wine; by exposing it to the action of artificial refrigeration, all the water would be alone, and the wine left in its purity.

By a similar process, ships at sea, being short of water, might be supplied with this necessary article. We will suppose the temperature of sea-water, under the tropics, to be 30 deg. centigrade. If a quantity be exposed in a vessel to the action of a mixture of sulphate of soda and hydrochloric acid, two very cheap commodities, the temperature of the water will fall to 10 deg. below freezing point. Let it then be exposed to a second mixture of the same kind, generally eight parts of sulphate to five of the acid, and the temperature may be lowered to 17 deg. below freezing point. Congealed water is then obtained free from salt, and may be used with impunity. Dr. Robinet has added a new fact to this theory by showing that the water of springs and rivers loses all its salts by congelation. These salts are chiefly those of lime and magnesia. The water subjected to experiment was that of the lakes of the Bois de Boulogne, the ice of which was found to be entirely free from the above-mentioned salts. Such, indeed, is the chemical purity of the water thus obtained, that it may in most instances be substituted for distilled water.

STATISTICS.

WRECKES.—During the past week 29 wrecks have been reported, making a total for the present year of 1,098.

GAME LICENCES.—It appears from a return just printed that the game licences last year realized in net £128,445, being a decrease of £12,539 on the year 1862.

DUTY ON SPIRITS.—According to a return issued there was a great decrease in the duties on spirits. In the year ending March last the amount was £9,399,707, while in the preceding year it was £9,618,291, showing a decrease of £218,584.

ANIMAL FOOD ANNUALLY REQUIRED FOR LONDON.—It is calculated that the metropolis alone consumes, in the course of a year, no fewer than 270,000 oxen, 30,000 calves, 1,500,000 sheep, and 30,000 pigs, to say nothing of the flocks of fowls and shoals of fish which find their way into the same channels of consumption. The total value of the flesh imported into London, alive and dead, cannot be much less than £14,000,000 annually.

THE COINAGE.—A return has been issued of all gold, silver, and copper moneys of the realm coined at the Mint from the 1st of January, 1853, to the 31st of December, 1862. It appears that the weight of the sovereigns issued was 13,433,307.345 oz., the number of pieces 52,305,938, and the value £52,305,940. Half-sovereigns, weight 1,720,217.970 oz., number of pieces 13,356,192, and the value £6,698,098. Silver coin—Crown and half-crown, none; florins, weight 5,836,654.750 oz., number of pieces 18,050,800, and the value £4,605,080; shillings, 4,288,229 oz., pieces 23,585,261, and value £1,179,263; sixpences, weight 1,830,400 oz., pieces 20,134,410, value £503,360; groats, weight 112,095 oz., pieces 1,849,574, value £30,826; fourpences, weight 2,620 oz., pieces 41,580, value £693; threepences, weight 798,758 oz., pieces 17,577,076, value £319,713; twopences, weight 1,440 oz., pieces 47,520, value £396; pence, weight 1,200 oz., pieces 79,200, value £330; three-halfpenny pieces, weight 10,901 oz., number of pieces 479,670, value £2,997. The copper was as follows: Pence, weight 784 tons 5 cwt., pieces, 109,613,840, value £437,016; halfpence, weight 942 tons 16 cwt., pieces 150,112,925, value £312,735; farthings, 150 tons 5 cwt., pieces 42,635,983, value £44,412; and half-farthings, 5 tons 18 cwt., pieces 2,546,592, value £1,326.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

REMEDY FOR SMALL-POX.—The surgeon-major of the Royal Horse Guards Blue states that the root of the pitcher-plant is a specific for this disease. An ounce of the root is sliced in a quart of water, and allowed to simmer down to a pint, and given in two table-spoonful doses every four hours, while the patient is well nourished with beef-tea and arrowroot.

LIQUID PERMANGANATE OF POTASH.—M. Leconte prepares this solution in the following manner:—Caustic potash, six drachms; chlorate of potash, five drachms; binoxide of manganese, five drachms. Dissolve the caustic potash and the chlorate in a small quantity of water, and add the manganese; get rid of the water by evaporation, stirring constantly, and calcine the dry mass to a dark red for an hour in an untinned iron cup; allow to cool, and add a quart of plain water. Then boil for five minutes in a china capsule, and you will obtain a fluid of a slightly purplish tint; decant the solution, and wash the residue

with such a quantity of water as to make altogether two quarts. When filtering is thought necessary, the liquid should be passed, not through paper, but through very fine sand. For dressing foul wounds, or for injecting, use one drachm of this solution to from three drachms to five of spring water.

FOOD FOR FATTENING POULTRY.—The cheapest and most advantageous food to use for fattening every description of poultry is ground oats. These must not be confounded with oatmeal, or with ordinary ground oats. The whole of the grain is ground to a fine powder; nothing of any kind is taken from it. When properly ground, one bushel of the meal will more effectually fatten poultry than a bushel and a half of any other meal. The greatest point in fattening poultry is to feed at daybreak.

FACETIE.

MEDICAL.—Atna has been vaccinated for an eruption. The mountain is getting on as well as can be expected.—*Punch*.

A **COUNTRYMAN** says he wouldn't mind the price of wood so much, if all his neighbours hadn't taken to the disgusting habit of locking their wood-house doors at night.

A **CURIOUS** ceremony took place in Bicester last week—a marriage in which the bride and bridegroom, the bridesmaids and best man, the officiating minister, clerk, and registrar, all rejoiced in the name of Smith.

"MAMMA," said a little girl, pointing to the telegraph wires, "how do they send messages by those bits of wire, without tearing them to pieces?"—"They send them in a fluid state, my dear," was the reply.

FRIENDLY CONTENDUM.—Why is a French steam vessel on her passage from Calais to Dover a sign of the amicable relations of the two Great Powers? Because it shows the existence of a French ship between France and England.—*Punch*.

HOW TO PROCURE A HUSBAND.

The following true story might, perhaps, furnish matters for a little comedy. It is generally the case, that the more beautiful and the richer a female is, the more difficult are both her parents and herself in the choice of a husband, and the more offers they refuse. The one is too tall, the other too short, this not wealthy, that not respectable enough. Meanwhile one spring passes after another, and year after year carries away leaf after leaf of the bloom of youth, and opportunity after opportunity.

Miss Harriet Selwood was the richest heiress in her native town; but she had already completed her twenty-seventh year, and beheld almost all her young friends united to men whom she had at one time or other discarded. Harriet began to be set down for an old maid. Her parents became really uneasy, and she herself lamented in private a position which is not a natural one, and to which those to whom nature and fortune have always been niggardly of their gifts, are obliged to submit; but Harriet, as we have said, was both handsome and very rich.

Such was the state of things when her uncle, a wealthy merchant in the north of England, came on a visit to her parents. He was a jovial, likely, straightforward man, accustomed to attack all difficulties boldly and coolly.

"You see," said her father to him, one day, "Harriet continues single. The girl is handsome; what she is to have for her fortune, you know; even in this scandal-loving town, not a creature can breathe the slightest imputation against her; and yet she is getting to be an old maid."

"True," replied the uncle; "but look you, brother, the grand point in every affair in this world is to seize the right moment. This you have not done—it is a misfortune; but let the girl go along with me, and before the end of three months I will return her to you as the wife of a man as young and wealthy as herself."

Away went the niece with the uncle. On the way home, he thus addressed her:

"Mind what I am going to say. You are no longer Miss Selwood, but Mrs. Lumley, my niece; a young, wealthy, childless widow. You had the misfortune to lose your husband, Colonel Lumley, after a union of a quarter of a year, by a fall from his horse, while hunting."

"But, uncle—"

"Let me manage, if you please, Mrs. Lumley. Your father has invested me with full power. Here, look you, is the wedding-ring given you by your late husband. Jewels, and whatever else you need, your aunt will supply you with; and accustom yourself to east down your eyes."

The keen-witted uncle introduced his niece everywhere, and the young widow excited a great sensation. The gentlemen thronged about her, and she soon had her choice out of twenty suitors. Her uncle advised her to take the one who was dearest in love with her, and a rare chance decreed that this should be precisely

the most amiable and opulent. The match was, soon concluded, and one day the uncle desired to say a few words to his future nephew in private.

"My dear sir," he began, "we have told you an untruth."

"How so? Are Mrs. Lumley's affections—"

"Nothing of that kind. My niece is sincerely attached to you."

"Then her fortune, I suppose, is not equal to what you told me?"

"On the contrary, it is larger."

"Well, what is the matter, then?"

"A joke, an innocent joke, which came into my head one day when I was in a good humour—we could not well recall it afterward. My niece is not a widow."

"What! Is Colonel Lumley living?"

"No, no, she is a spinster."

The lover protested that he was a happier fellow than he had conceived himself; and the old maid was forthwith metamorphosed into a young wife.

FEARFUL TRAGEDY.—The other day an eccentric gentleman was standing on the top of the Monument, with a friend, with whom he had promised subsequently to dine. Wishing, however, to go to the theatre, he determined to throw his friend over, and slip out quietly. He effected his cruel purpose, and we regret to say, has not since been seen.—*Punch*.

A WITTY AIDES-DE-CAMP.

During the battle, the Federal General Meade observed one of his aides-de-camp, a very young man, shrink every now and then, and, by the motion of his body, seek to evade, if possible, the shot.

"Sir," said Meade, "what do you mean? Do you think you can dodge the balls? Do you not know that Napoleon lost about a hundred aides-de-camp in one campaign?"

"So I've read," replied the young officer, "but I did not think you could spare so many."

BOGIE AND THE BOTTLE.—Says George Cruikshank, in a letter to the *Athenaeum* on the subject of ghosts:—"In fact, I may say that, for more than half a century, I have been from time to time holding up ghosts to ridicule and contempt." We did not know that our friend George had been so long engaged in quizzing ghosts, though we were aware that of late years he had been making terrible fun of spirits.—*Punch*.

SMELLING THE MEDICINE.

Little Freddy H—, a four-year-old son of Chaplain H—, of the —th Regiment, perpetrated a good thing while at camp, a short time since. A smart-looking lieutenant, with dashing air and perfumed breath, came into a tent where Freddy was. The little soldier scanned him very closely, and when a convenient opportunity offered itself, he said to the lieutenant, "You are a doctor; I know you are a doctor."

"No, my little man," replied the officer, "you are mistaken this time; I am not a doctor."

"Yes, you are a doctor too," replied Freddy. "I know you are a doctor, for I can smell the medicine!"

This was too good a thing to be kept, and half an hour had not elapsed before it had spread throughout the regiment.

PREVENTION OF RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—We are informed by an interesting parliamentary return, that during the year ending December 31, 1862, there were 216 persons killed and 600 injured in consequence of railway accidents, whereas, during 1861, the number of lives lost through them was 284, and the number of persons injured 883. Since, in 1862, there were many more miles of railway open than in 1861, the preceding figures indicate a relative decrease considerably greater than the absolute diminution of the list of the railway killed and wounded. What an encouragement this is to juries to go on giving heavy damages to persons who have sustained injuries or lost relations by any railway accident which human forethought could possibly have prevented.—*Punch*.

ANECDOTE OF THE LATE EARL OF ELDON.—In 1783, when Mr. Scott first became a candidate for the borough of Weobly, he was received and lodged in the house of Mr. Bridge, the vicar, who having a daughter then a young child, took a jocular promise from him, that if he should ever become Lord Chancellor, and the little girl's husband should be a clergyman, the Chancellor would give that clergyman a living. Now comes the sequel, partly related by Lord Eldon himself to his niece Mrs. Forster. Years rolled on—I came into office, when one morning I was told a young lady wished to speak to me; and I said that young ladies must be attended to, so they must show her up; and up came a very pretty young lady, and she curtsied and simpered, and said she thought I could not recollect her. I answered I certainly did not, but perhaps she could recall herself to my memory; so she asked if I remembered the clergyman at Weobly, and his little girl to whom I had made a promise. "Oh yes!" I said, "I do; and I suppose you are the little girl?" She curtsied and said "Yes." "And I suppose you are married to a clergyman?" "No," she said, and she

blushed. "I am only going to be married to one if you will give him a living." Well, I told her to come back in a few days; and I made inquiries to ascertain from the bishop of the diocese that the gentleman she was going to be married to was a respectable clergyman of the Church of England; and then I looked at my list, and found I actually had a living vacant that I could give him. So when the young lady came back I told her that she might return and get married as fast as she liked, for her intended husband should be presented to a living, and I would send the papers as soon as they could be made out. "Oh, no!" she exclaimed; and again she simpered, and blushed, and curtsied; "pray, my lord, let me take them back myself." I was a good deal amused; so I actually had them papers made out, and signed them, and she took them back herself the following day.—*Tales of the Life of Eldon*.

A NEW NAME FOR A MAID-SERVANT.—When will people learn to call a spade a spade? For instance, only look at this:—"Wanted, a governess, 'competent,' and to take entire charge of the wardrobe of six children.—Apply, &c." She who takes "entire charge of the wardrobe" of half-a-dozen children, should be called a clothes-keeper rather than a governess. But a governess is often hired for less pay than a maid-servant; and so, when ladies want a mistress of the robes worn in the nursery, instead of asking for a nursemaid or a wardrobe-woman, they add a smack of education to their other requisitions, and in their advertisements say they want a governess.—*Punch*.

A COMPENSATING ADVANTAGE.

Last week, Madame B—, an old lady full of youthful airs and pretensions, arrived very late at the *soirée* of her friend.

"How late you are, my *toute belle*," exclaimed the mistress of the house.

"Ah, yes, I regret it greatly; but do you know, my dear, I have so slow a mind, that it takes her an hour and a half to dress my hair!"

"Happily for madame," whispered an observant lady close by, to a friend, "she is not obliged to be present, but can take a walk while it is being done!"

A PUNCH REMEDY.—A NEW PRESCRIPTION.—A patient named John Flynn, in the Waterford Workhouse Hospital, is committed for trial at Waterford Petty Sessions for breaking several panes of glass in Dr. Burkett's residence, because that gentleman declined to prescribe punch for his infirmities, while under his treatment.

YOU CAN DO IT.

As a pedestrian tourist in France was lately proceeding towards Tours, he asked a man who was breaking stones by the roadside, how long it would take him to reach that place? The man looked at him without speaking, and then resumed his work. The question was repeated with the same result, and at last the traveller walked on. He had not proceeded more than a hundred yards, when the man called after him, and made a sign for him to return. When the pedestrian reached the stonebreaker, the latter said to him:

"It will take you an hour to reach Tours."

"Then why did you not tell me so at first?" said the traveller.

"Why," replied the man, "it was necessary for me first to see at what rate you walked; and from the way you step out, I am now able to say, that you can do the distance in an hour."

A SAD BLOW FOR THE SPIRIT-RAPPERS.

It is stated among other things concerning Mr. Home, the Medium, that he has been rather variously inclined in his religious phases of belief, having first been a member of the Kirk of Scotland, after that a Wesleyan, after that a Congregationalist, next a catechumen in Swedenborgism, and finally a convert to the Roman Catholic church. The writer adds in a footnote:

"We are told that Mr. Home's last conversion has given great scandal to some of the Protestant organs of spiritualism in the press, who however console themselves with the thought that he may perhaps be destined to convert the Pope to a belief in rapping."

If Mr. Home be a good Catholic he cannot have much faith himself that this will be his destiny: for when he was converted (says the writer) "he was assured by his confessor that, as he was now a member of the Catholic Church, his power (as a spiritualist) would not return to him." Whether this be so or not, it is certain that Mr. Home has done nothing in the rapping way of late, that the world at large has heard of; and if his conversion has knocked the rapping out of him, we beg leave to congratulate him as well as his confessor, and to give whatever praise is due unto them both. We know the old saying about "two of a trade," and a church that has its own old superstitions to support is not likely to look favourably upon new ones that may rival them. The gullibility of man, although immense, may be exhausted; and while the

Romish priests have their own little peepshows to look after, such as their yearly Bleeding Saint and Winking Picture of the Virgin, they are not likely to encourage spirit-rapping exhibitions, which may also have a tendency towards exhaustion of credulity.—*Punch*.

It is proposed to modify the old English comedies for the American stage, so that the favourite phrase of the passionate paterfamilias to the ungrateful son—"Zounds! sir, I'll cut you off with a shilling,"—shall read:—"I'll cut you off with a small piece of paper bearing portraits of the Father of his Country, and called Postage Currency, or with two car tickets, do not you!" The threat is so terrific, that the prodigal immediately "cuts off" himself, and is seen no more.

A SCOTCH FARMER.

Until a few years back, it was the custom in Perthshire for servants to call any cow or calf their masters might purchase by the name of the town from which it came, or by the name and surname of its previous owner. The following is a good illustration of this practice.

A farmer once lived not far from St. Martin's. This worthy old gentleman bought a calf from an elderly neighbour named Storer, but before he reached home with his purchase the shades of evening had closed around him, and his family and domestic servants had retired to rest. Disdaining to disturb either family or servants he proceeded to the byre, and bound the calf with his own hands.

On entering the house, he informed his elder son of what he had done, and observed that he would see it in the morning. On the following morning the son went to the byre to see the calf, but was surprised to find that it was dead.

He immediately went to his father, and, with a sorrowful face, informed him that Jamie Storer was dead. "Oh, never mind!" said the sire; "Jamie was an oddish sort of a man; you couldn't look for anything else. In fact, I aye thoct he wad gang awa' like the snuffing of a candle. Never mind, never mind!"

"Aye, but father," exclaimed the son, "it's Jamie Storer the calf that's dead!"

"Jamie Storer the calf!" shouted the venerable sire; "that alters the case. Bring me my slippers."

The order was speedily obeyed. Together they reached the byre, only to find the sad tale verified. Poor Jamie had been rather slack-bound, and in his struggle to free himself, he was choked. The old man left the byre, muttering to himself:

"Ah, weel! Ah, weel!—it's but world's gear! It may be better the way it is; auld Jamie is a nice kind of fellow!"

UNBONNETTING THE LADIES.—At the Urania Theatre, Berlin, all ladies are required to take off their bonnets before entering the theatre to take their places. This provision has been found necessary, since, owing to the present fashion prevailing in that article of female attire, it is almost impossible for persons sitting behind a lady with her bonnet on to see what is going forward on the stage. At a theatre in Paris the same end has been attained by placing printed bills about the theatre containing the following announcement:—"All young and handsome ladies are politely requested to take off their bonnets. All others may keep them on."

TURN HIM OUT.

General Mackenzie, when Commander-in-chief of the Chatham Division of Marines, was very rigid in his duty, and, among other regulations, would suffer no officer to be saluted on guard if out of his uniform. One day the general observed a Lieutenant of marines in a plain dress, and, though he knew the young officer intimately, he called to the sentinel to turn him out.

The officer appealed to the general, saying who he was.

"I know you not," said the general; "turn him out!"

A short time after, the general had been at a small distance from Chatham to pay a visit, and returning in the evening, in a blue coat, claimed entrance at the yard gate. The sentinel demanded the countersign, which the general not knowing, desired the officer of the guard to be sent for, who proved to be the lieutenant whom the general had treated so cavalierly.

"Who are you?" inquired the officer.

"I am General Mackenzie," was the reply.

"What! without a uniform?" rejoined the Lieutenant.

"Turn him out! turn him out!" The general would break his bones if he knew he assumed his name.

The general made his retreat, but the next day, inviting the young officer to breakfast, he told him "he had done his duty with very commendable exactness."

A QUAIN writer remarks that the human race is divided into two classes—those who go-a-head and do something, and those who sit still and inquire, "Why wasn't it done the other way?"

MODEL SPEECH.—A deceased chief justice once addressed a jury in the following model speech: "Gentlemen of the jury, in this case the counsel on both sides are unintelligible; the witnesses incredible; and the

plaintiffs and defendants are both such bad characters that to me it is indifferent which way you give your verdict." There was brevity, satire and point almost unparalleled. A great man was that chief justice.

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VERBS.—A teacher, one day, endeavouring to make a pupil understand the nature and application of a passive verb, said—"A passive verb is expressive of the nature of receiving an action, as Peter is beaten. Now, what did Peter do?" The boy, pausing a moment, with the gravest countenance imaginable replied—"Well, I don't know, without he hollered."

THE NILE.

The full moon is beaming brightly
O'er the river's rushing bed,
While we float along the current,
With the blue sky overhead;

Trees their emerald branches trailing,
Gorgeous flowers to them wed.
All the essence of the tropics
O'er our sluggish senses steal;

"Odours from a thousand flowers"
Crowding on us now we feel,
While the moonbeam's daylike glimmers
In between the rich glooms steal.

So we lie wrapt in Elysium—
Was Paradise thus divine?

Floating past the waving branches,
Where the tropic beauties twine,
Bending downward toward the river,
Where the second heavens shine.

Thus we float upon thy surface,
Oh, thou ancient Father Nile!
Famed in Scripture and in story,
With which we the hours beguile,
Drinking in delicious gladness,
Feeling Paradise the while.

While bright Luna downward travels,
We grow warm within her beams,
While we smoke our "Latakiah,"
Sending out the puffs in streams,
We keep drifting ever onward,
"Dreaming visionary dreams."

Thou art bright, oh, Father Nilus!
Luscious is thy tropic spell!
If thou hadst a mouth for speaking,
Many a story thou couldst tell
Of the plagues that swept o'er Egypt,
And on thee, proud river, fell!

Roll on, with the buried ages
Sheathed within thy water's flow,
Sparkling back the silver moonbeams
That upon thee come and go,
Flowing seaward with the burdens
None but thee shall ever know!

E. W.

GEMS.

The heart which is capable of receiving the purest rays of joy, must have been shadowed by the darkest clouds of sorrow.

Little can be done without determination; and certainly no great acquirement can be made without patient and steady application.

Persistence not only goes far to insure success, but also obtains honours for those who, although the least fortunate, have been the most diligent.

When a man has once forfeited the reputation of his integrity, he is set fast, and nothing will serve his turn—neither truth nor falsehood.

It would be well, indeed, if selfishness came into play on those occasions only where self is really concerned.

None are so hard to please as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves; nor any so readily provoked as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

If you have not the indulgence to pardon your friends, nor they the same to pardon you, your friendship will last no longer than it can serve both your interests.

A man with great talents, but void of discretion, is like Polyphemus in the fable, strong and blind; endowed with an irresistible force, which, for want of sight, is of no use to him.

Before an affliction is digested, consolation ever comes too soon; and after it is digested, it comes too late; there is but a mark between these two, as fine almost as a hair, for a comforter to take aim at.

Truth is always consistent with itself, and needs nothing to help it out: it is always near at hand, sits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are

* "Latakiah," a kind of tobacco smuggled by Bayard Taylor, in his "Travels in Central Africa."

aware; a lie is troublesome, and sets a man's invention upon the rack, and one trick needs a great many more to make it good.

How brightly do little joys beam upon a soul which stands on a ground darkened by the clouds of sorrow; so do stars come forth from the empty sky, when we look up to them from a deep well.

A GREAT advantage of friendship is the opportunity of receiving good advice. It is dangerous relying always on your own opinion. Miserable is his case who, when he needs, has no one to admonish him.

A MAN shall see, where there is a house full of children, one or two of the eldest restricted, and the youngest ruined by indulgence; but in the midst, some that are, as it were, forgotten, who many times, nevertheless, prove the best.

We all of us have two educations—one of which we receive from others; another, and the most valuable, which we give ourselves. It is this last which fixes our grade in society, and eventually our actual value in this life, and perhaps the colour of our fate hereafter.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MDLLE. PATTI is to receive a salary of £120 a night at the Grand Opera at Paris.

SEVERAL German banking houses have offered Spain a loan of 500 million reals, at 6 per cent., to repair the disaster which has taken place at Manila.

THE Duke of Marlborough has forwarded 100 guineas to the Radcliffe Infirmary at Oxford, being the proceeds of fees from visitors to Blenheim Palace and Gardens.

MDLLE. D'ANGEVILLE, now aged 65, and residing at Lausanne, has just made the ascent of the Oldenhorn, a height of 9,260 feet, in 10 hours, and accompanied by a single guide.

INTELLIGENCE from Wilna states that scarcely a week ago General Mouravieff decreed the confiscation of 162 estates in the palatinate of Wilna. He has now issued an order for the sequestration of 193 more.

THE *New York Times* of the 5th ult. gives a list of 47 inquests, held by coroners on the previous day, on persons who had been sun-struck. Most of them were natives of Ireland.

We are told that an English photographer, Mr. Warner, has succeeded in taking a photograph of the last impression in the retina of the eye of an ox, which was, of course, his executioner. A Dr. Philpott writes to "Cosmos" confirmative of this statement.

GENERAL PRINCE NICHOLAS MOURAVIEFF, who has been commissioned by the Czar to pacify Poland, was born in Moscow in the year 1793. He commenced his military career in 1810, in the army serving in the Caucasus.

BETWEEN three and four o'clock on Saturday afternoon, the 22nd of August, Dr. Narni, the proprietor of the horrible instruments of torture which have been exhibited and lectured upon by Madame Seyton-Siarc at St. James's Hall, committed suicide by blowing out his brains at his lodgings.

THE *Assaye* and *Kirkham* sailing-vessels are now shipping, from the works of Messrs. Henley, North Woolwich, 560 miles of the Indian submarine electric telegraph cable manufactured by that firm. The total length of the cable taken out will amount to 1,250 miles weighing upwards of 5,000 tons.

THE notorious Florida seems to be making a long cruise on the Irish coast. She has been seen by some boatmen about twelve miles from the lighthouse near Cork harbour. She was then shaping her course due north-east, and soon steamed out of sight. Shortly after she appeared again, pursuing the opposite course.

THE Belgian papers relate a most singular trial for murder. A boy of thirteen, named Blanchart, murdered another boy only four years old, named Kernoir. Blanchart was club-footed, and the child had laughed at him and called him names. The precocious little villain related with the greatest sang-froid the circumstances of the crime.

THE Polish prisoners in Lithuania are not allowed any communication whatever with their friends, and the windows of their cells have been painted over with white paint. The bread which is given them is of the coarsest kind, and so hard it is almost impossible to chew it. They are not allowed any change of linen, and are forced to sleep on the bare ground, with nothing but a straw pillow under their heads; mattresses, blankets, and sheets being strictly forbidden. One of the prisoners in the Augustina convent became mad in consequence of this treatment, and jumped out of the third floor into the courtyard of the adjoining house and escaped. Mouravieff has ordered the proprietor of this house to bring the fugitive before him within three days, failing which the proprietor is to go to prison himself.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. T. H.—A man is not bound to maintain his wife's legitimate offspring by a former husband.

A. S.—To give an apprentice a settlement as such under the Poor Law, he must have been bound by deed.

C. C. C.—Promises to pay debts barred by the Statute of Limitations do not require a stamp.

Y. P.—Yes; a contract made by a person under age for the purchase of goods for the purposes of trade, is absolutely void.

GENERAL LEE.—The apprenticeship being a personal trust imposed on the master, he cannot assign it without the permission of the other parties to the deed.

WASHINGTON.—An alien enemy—that is, the subject of a state actually at war with us—cannot lawfully contract with British subjects, unless he has obtained a license to trade.

J. A. C.—What is said in a court of justice for the purpose of defence or accusation, is privileged; but mere abuse uttered there is actionable.

LEAH.—Receipts given for wages, pay, or pension, due from the navy, army, or ordnance offices, do not require a penny stamp.

A. M.—The hiring of domestic servants is regulated entirely by custom; the duration of the contract is not specified, and a month's warning on either side is sufficient to bring it to a close.

ROBERT K.—All parochial relief given to a wife on account of her children under the age of sixteen, not being blind, or lame, or dumb, is considered as given to the husband, and he is responsible for it.

ALFRED (BATH).—Every person running away and leaving his or her children chargeable to the parish, is deemed "a rogue and a vagabond," and is liable to imprisonment, with hard labour, for three calendar months.

YOUNG MAY MOON.—It is a criminal offence to carry off a ward in Chancery from the custody of those to whom the court has committed him or her; against the consequences of which even the privilege of Parliament is no protection.

ADAM BEEDE (LIVERPOOL).—The sickness of an apprentice, or his incapacity to serve in consequence of weakness caused by ill-health, does not discharge the master from his liability to provide for and maintain him.

A. SUTHERLAND (BOCHUMSTOWN).—No; a person under age is not liable for money borrowed upon a bill of exchange, even though the cash were actually expended in the purchase of such articles as would be held to be necessities.

ANOTHER GUY.—The sale of fireworks is prohibited by statute; but the Act imposing a penalty for selling them, or moulds, cases, and instruments for their manufacture, has become almost a dead letter.

M. P.—No; an undertaking to be answerable for the debt on default of another is not enforceable at law, without a consideration for it, and such undertaking must be in writing, and signed by the party to be charged thereby.

TOM PAINK.—We do not see you have anything to complain of. If I employ a person to act for me in any matter of trade or business, I am responsible for all that he does within the scope of the authority which I have given him.

MABEL (EXETER).—A tenancy upon sufferance is the lowest that can be held. It arises when a man comes into possession of lands under a lawful tenure, and, at the expiration of it, holds on without any title at all.

F. P.—A sympathetic ink is a colour with which a person may write, and yet nothing appear on the paper after it is dry, till it is held before the fire, or some liquid is rubbed over it to bring out the writing. The following are the most common methods in use: Write with the juice of onions, solution of sal ammoniac, milk, lemon-juice, or diluted sulphuric acid; the writing will become brown or black when held to the fire, but does not recover its invisibility after it has cooled.

L. E. asks whether it is proper for her to accept the attentions of a young gentleman who was formerly her sister's lover, but whose affection was completely destroyed by coldness and indifference. It is very probable that "L. E." all the time, was the sister he really loved, and the other, discovering the fact, did her utmost to open his eyes to the real state of his heart. Now that his eyesight has been restored, we can see no impropriety in acknowledging his profession of attachment. In courtship, sisters are very frequently foils to each other. When they cannot thwart, they assist.

W. B.—To bronze brass: Take an English pint of strong beer, one ounce of sal ammoniac, half an ounce of alum, a quarter of an ounce of arsenic; dissolve them in the beer, and the compound is fit for use. This must be done with a small brush, and the work must be kept constantly wet, to prevent it from turning green. When the colour which is wished has been obtained, which will generally be in from twenty to thirty minutes, the work must be quickly washed in clean, cold water, and then dried in soft, warm sawdust, after which the whole is laid over with a coating of lacquer, which preserves the colour.

E. O. B.—A very likely cause of your peach blossoms becoming single and bearing fruit, is that the soil in which the tree is growing is too poor and light, and the south exposure may have something to do with it, a double flower being simply one in which stamens and pistils are exchanged for petals; and, therefore, if your peach lacks nourishment at the root, and is exposed to a hot sun, the tendency to single flowers and fruitfulness is sure to be the result. Many of our double-flowering barks—such, for instance, as *Narcissus*—become single when grown for a length of time in a poor, dry soil. Try what partially lifting your peach and substituting very rich soil will do for the continuance of double flowers.

G. M.—Your melons crack because you give them too much water when they ought to be ripening. After a melon begins to net it needs no water beyond that necessary to keep the leaves from flagging. After so much bright weather as we have had lately a great many melons have cracked; for the simple reason that bright sun tends to early maturity; under it the rind of the melon becomes hard, and when cloudy weather sets in the vines grow more freely, impelling more matter into the fruit, which being rendered hard or rind-bound by the influence of hot sun, refuses to expand, and literally cracks to make way for the increased amount of nourishment driven into them. It is hopeless to expect crack melons to swell any more after a season of bright sunshine; therefore, the atmosphere should be kept dry, and less water by half given in dull than in sunny weather. The melon requires as

much water as a cucumber from the time of setting until it begins to net, and after that it can hardly have too little. Our scarlet gems this year are smaller than common, but exquisite in flavour. Keep the atmosphere of your frame dry by leaving a touch of air on all night, and give no more water at the root.

F. W. W. (LONDON).—You will receive any advice of the kind you want at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Smithfield, between the hours of nine and eleven in the morning, and six and seven in the evening.

J. M. (MANCHESTER).—We are glad that you approve of our having commenced "Woman and her Master" in THE LONDON READER, as the same gratification has been expressed by a great many more of our subscribers.

W. H. (WOOLWICH).—We have made inquiry, but have not received a satisfactory answer. Write to the architect or builder of the lunatic asylum in question, enclosing a stamped envelope, and you will, in all probability, be immediately informed.

MARY STUART.—Placing ourselves in your position, we should treat him as he is treating you, that is, with as much indifference as possible, and by no means allow him to know, from ourselves, that we loved him. Your writing is very good.

WM. HY. TERRY (WAKEFIELD).—Eastlake's "Materials for a History of Painting;" the article on "Colour" in "Ure's Dictionary of Arts;" and "Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds on Painting." There is an admirable edition of the last in Bohn's "Standard Library," edited by Foster.

R. S. F. (LIVERPOOL).—Although there is some smartness in a few of your lines, yet you are very far from the Laureateship, we would, therefore, advise you to abandon the "unprofitable trade" of "rhyming," and study the acquirement of a good style in prose.

F. F.—Before you think of going to Paris in search of occupation as a cabdriver, it is essential that you should be acquainted with the French language, as, otherwise, it would be impossible for you to be of the smallest service in such a capacity in that metropolis.

JUSTICEA.—A young lady of great personal attraction, a brunette; age, 20; height, 5 ft. 1 in.; an amiable disposition, accomplished, and domesticated, wishing to enter the happy state of matrimony, desires to correspond with one who is willing to unite his fate with hers.

LILY.—A young lady who is desirous of entering the holy state of matrimony—new offers her hand and heart to some gentleman suitable to her taste, who could give his in return. Lily is about 22 years of age, 5 ft. 3 in. in height, and considered by all who know her to be a thorough domesticated young lady. Should this meet the eye of the LONELY ONE, Lily would be happy to correspond.

E. G. R. L.—If you mean in point of honour or dignity, it is hard to say, as many persons who pursue merely mechanical arts now distinguish themselves as professors. Thus barbers or hairdressers call themselves professors, although their calling is entirely mechanical. If, however, you mean in point of antiquity, the profession of arms should come next to the learned professions, as that, certainly, has the most remote claim to rank. Your handwriting, with careful and constant practice, will soon greatly improve.

T. C. G. is desirous of knowing whether it is improper for her to keep any presents given her by a young man, whom she is sure is much attached to her—but she is positive she cannot return his affection. Decidedly improper—because it is practising a kind of deception on the young man, in leading him to believe what is really not the fact. Judged severely, it would not be over-honest conduct—for, as lawyers would say, there is no valid consideration between parties so situated. The presents must be returned, with a kind note, containing a frank declaration.

I. L.—All nonsense. A fair-complexioned couple may be as happy in the wedded state as a couple whose complexions differ. The prevailing opinion on the subject of colour is a mania. In Spain the women prefer fair men; the redder their hair the better—in England dark men have the eul, as they say on the Stock Exchange. Dark-complexioned people, as a rule, have southern blood in their veins; and it has been remarked, the people of this country are gradually becoming darker. By physiologists this is not considered a favourable sign. Fair-complexioned races are considered the most perfect and healthy.

R. R.—The law says a wife ought not to impoverish her husband, even to succour her distressed parents; but as the natural law is superior to the social, all such cases must be judged by the particular circumstances. In this instance, the wife is doing that clandestinely which she ought to do openly. We advise her to obtain the assistance her parent requires as a favour—not to exact it as a right. Peace at home is a pearl of great price. As to the charge of theft, that is ridiculous. A wife cannot steal from her husband, nor a husband from his wife. Their interests are identical. But in all matters like these, the wife should make some concession to her husband's pride or vanity, or it may be stinginess. A little coaxing does wonders, and wives should bear in mind that husbands are not naturally filly-hearted.

G. S.—One of the vices of the age is a contempt for labour. The race for gentility is the race for the workhouse and the gaol. People crowd their children into the professions, and when the latter have grown up, finding they cannot obtain a living by their own exertions, they live on their friends, or how they can—because they have neither the strength, the ability, nor the inclination to follow those more mechanical, and of course more drudging employments, they from their earliest years were taught to despise. When these unfortunate have no friends to live upon, they starve, or have recourse to disreputable practices. Your fit will go off; but a little hard work would do you good.

E. D.—It has been satisfactorily determined that there are mountains in the moon. Although this planet is 230,000 miles distant from this, telescopes and the labours of learned men have introduced us to some extensive knowledge of its physical character. When looked at with the naked eye, it is easy to see that the inner circle presents an extremely ragged line, while the outer circle is extremely smooth. When we examine this inner edge with a strong telescope, we find a great number of luminous points, which grow larger as the sun bears upon their locality. Behind those spots a deep shade is cast, which always moves so as to be in opposition to the sun. Those bright spots are the summits of high mountains, and the deep shade is the shadow of the lower parts; the deep shade is the shadow of the mountain casts, and is always found to be in exact proportion, as to length, with the moun-

tain, when the inclination of the sun's rays is taken into account. From measurements made of the length of these shadows, the height of the highest of these mountains may be calculated. It will be readily understood that the length of a shadow indicates the height of a body behind which it is cast, formed the inclination by which the light falls is known. Whenever the light falls on a perpendicular body, with an inclination of half a right angle, the shadow formed beyond is exactly as long as the body is high. When the sun shines by this inclination upon the lunar mountains, their shadows are consequently as long as the mountains are tall. When the light falls with a greater inclination, the shadow is lengthened in a ratio that is known to the mathematician.

J. A.—The Greek slave is an ideal creation of the poet. Women in Constantinople are treated with great consideration and humanity.

P. K.—The statue of Nelson on the pillar at Charing Cross is of granite. It is in two pieces; and the blocks were a present from the Duke of Buccleuch.

A. E., a charming girl of eighteen, would like to be introduced to one of our gentlemen correspondents who was in search of a wife, about the middle height, with dark hair and eyes, an amiable temper, cultivated musical tastes, and an intense fondness for the comforts of home.

P. X.—The word "British," for the inhabitants of this country, is more correct than "English"; for the former comprises all the different races that have settled in this island—the latter has strictly a local meaning; and in the present day its application is incorrect. Pure Englishmen are scarce commodities in the human market.

J. C.—You wish to know why the "harvest moon" continues so much longer at full than at other times. If it do so, one would find it very difficult to explain the phenomenon; but it is a popular fallacy which has led to your inquiry. The "harvest moon" wanes as fast as others, but it rises for many evenings at very near the same hour.

E. C.—Two young gentlemen have been paying their addresses to this young lady: one is tall and handsome, but of such a disposition that she mortally hates him. The other, though not so handsome, is every way to her mind. The latter has said to do the old hat, and she has said to do the new, and is not so well off. "E. C.," it appears, looks at the siller with one eye, and a "young man to her mind" with the other. With such a distorted vision of course she cannot see clearly, but she will see clear enough by-and-by. If the young man "who has met with several crosses" has not himself to blame for those crosses, why he is the "young man" for "E. C.," but if he has been imprudent, she had better have no other. There should be no cloud in the wedded horizon on the nuptial morn.

W. B.—Counting a Billion—What is a billion? The reply is very simple—a million times a million. This is quickly written, and quicker still pronounced. But no man is able to count it. You count 160 or 170 a minute—but let us even suppose that you go as far as 300—then an hour will produce 12,000; a day 288,000; and a year, or 365 days, 105,120,000. Let us suppose now, that Adam, at the beginning of his existence, had begun to count, had continued to do so, and was counting still, he would not even now, according to the usually supposed age of the globe, have counted near enough. For to count a billion, he would require 9,512 years, 34 days, 5 hours, and 20 minutes, according to the above rule. Now, supposing we were to allow the poor creature 12 hours daily, for rest, eating, and sleeping, he would need 19,024 years, 69 days, 10 hours, and 40 minutes.

M. F.—The term "White Lilies" is so perplexing an appellation that we are rather at a loss to know exactly to what plant our correspondent refers. It would save a deal of perplexity if, in asking for such information, more particulars were afforded, and if the proper botanic names were given to plants instead of the popular ones of which, in many cases, this being one of them, the same name is applied to several. We, however, suspect from our correspondent having basins of water formed round the lilies that they are water lilies. It is not very easy to determine what may have been the cause of their flowering weakly. We have always observed that the common *Nymphaea alba* and *lutea* have always thriven with the greatest luxuriance in clayey soils—i.e., in pieces of water where the bottom has been of clay, and if the lilies in this case are in a light material, we would recommend that soil of a heavy nature be substituted. They are not generally shy in flowering, and, perhaps, this may not be the cause. Perhaps by some means the foliage may have been prematurely destroyed, and that would affect their flowering and cause them to be altogether in a weaker state. If the wood of your brugmansias is, as you state, good, perhaps a little more time may cause them to be productive of flowers as well as your neighbours, who may, perhaps, have started his plants into growth earlier than yours, or may, perhaps, have kept them a little warmer. Generally they are very sure in blooming, and if yours do not flower this autumn, it would be difficult to say what has been the cause. The only way that you are likely to cause them to flower is to keep them healthy by a plentiful supply of water when they require it, not to keep them in the shade of other plants—such as climbers or vines, and to keep the foliage free from red spider, to which they are often subject. If they have made as good wood as usual, it is not too much to hope that they will flower this autumn yet. We have grown excellent flowering plants of this brugnansia from cuttings struck early in spring and grown on quickly and exposed to plenty of light in stove heat. By September they make fine strong plants in ten-inch pots, in which, if well supplied with water, they form very handsome plants, bearing plenty of flowers, and few plants are more picturesque and beautiful.

Nos. 1 and 2 of "THE LONDON READER" HAVE BEEN REPRINTED, AND MAY BE HAD TO ORDER OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER."

* * We cannot undertake to return rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

Now ready, Parts I. to IV. OF THE LONDON READER, price 6d. each.

London: Printed and Published for the Proprietor, at 234, Strand, by J. E. GELDER.